THE TIMES

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

75th Year

MAY 7 1976

3,869

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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 14 MAY 1976 • No 3,870 • 18p

Quentin Bell on Sickert

Détente & Disarray by Theodore Draper

Leiris par lui-même

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The General Strike

Fiction: Priestley, Bassani, Louisa May Alcott

A pastel by Degas, 1885, showing Sickert, J.-E. Blanche, Ludovic Halévy, Daniel Halévy, Henri Gervex and J. L. Gué, reproduced in Denys Sutton's Walter Sickert, *reviewed overleaf by Quentin Bell. The original drawing is in the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence.*

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The artist in character

By Quentin Bell

DENYS SUTTON:
Walter Sickert
270pp. Michael Joseph. £10.50.

When I was nineteen years old Sickert told me how to paint a picture. "Mon petit", he said (or at least he said something of the kind for this; it must be remembered, took place about half a century ago) "mon petit, it's dead easy, there's nothing to it. You look through old copies of *The Illustrated London News* or *Punch*, or better some paper like *Judy*, something the bloody critics will never have heard of, find something you like, square it up, paint it in monochrome using white and ultramarine and then let it dry for two or three weeks. When it's quite hard take an old silk handkerchief (I hadn't got an old silk handkerchief and it seemed to me that it was only people like Sickert who had such things, but I determined on the spot to buy a silk handkerchief and ago it as fast as I could) then take some linseed oil and rub down the picture until the surface is quite smooth. Then, using a restricted palette you paint the thing, but only with rare and discreet touches, just enough to give the local colour: touches, like a girl using lipstick." This was all received with attentive awe and in fact most carefully put into practice, although I knew very well that Sickert was not telling me how to paint the kind of Sickert that I most admired but rather those "echoes" which he was then producing and which cannot rank with his best work. What I failed to understand was that Sickert had already effectively told me how to paint a picture of that finer earlier kind, and had done so half an hour more than a quarter of an hour, at the end of which Sickert had executed a small full-length drawing, a study of my face, a detail of a hand and an arm. On this basis he proposed to make a full-length portrait, nor did he seem to think it necessary that I should return for further sittings.

Sickert in fact followed methods which to a student of that epoch seemed very unfamiliar. For him, whether he was using an old print or a new sketch, the painting was planned in sufficient detail for his purposes before he had even touched the canvas. The idea with which I had been brought up was that one actually discovered what one wanted to paint while one was engaged in the act of painting, the canvas becoming a kind of laboratory in which experiments were conducted, and new experiments devised, until at last the painter had adjusted and readjusted everything in his picture to his perfect satisfaction.

To Sickert such a proceeding would have appeared quite wrong-headed. Speed, firm and decision—those were the great qualities to be sought in the making of a work of art: *mais gut und schnell* had been his father's injunction, and it is interesting that even in so pedestrian an exercise as the copying of a Victorian print he managed to impart a quality of speed—those final cosmetic touches were clearly to be administered with deliberate haste—to bring a quality of life and spontaneity to the whole.

Not that Sickert said this in so many words; his method of teaching was always rather elliptical, and these instructions were sandwiched between much other information, as for instance a recital of the wrongs suffered by the Tichborne claimant, "a man sent to prison for signing his own name!" He seemed as much in earnest about the unhappy Caton as he was about Degas, about the iniquity of Roger Fry's views, and the greatness of Millet. Everything that he said was received with appropriate respect and credulity. I hope that I was never failing in respect, but belief did fail when he supplied a graphic account of the funeral of the great Duke of Wellington—an event which must surely have taken place some years before his birth. But at this point and indeed at a point far anterior to this, in fact at that stage when the great man so obligingly gave me these preposterous instructions for the painting of a picture, it is hard not to suppose that Walter was not curious to see how much would be swallowed by a rather owlish and over-eager art student and one who was, surely, a legitimate subject for a little teasing mystification. Sickert was in fact an arch-teaser. He hung "The Monarch of the Glen" in his studio; did he admire it? Oh, yes, but also "c'est pour emmerder Roger Fry". In the same way, did he admire Poynter and Orchardson quite as much as he pretended he did?

It was hard to say. There was teasing of another kind, too. Finding a drawing made by him in about 1904, he would carefully sign it *Walter Richard Sickert A.R.A. 1931.* "That", he would happily observe, "will bugger the art experts." He was not very kind about the art experts and had a particular aversion to Berenson, which led him to one of his finest flights of comic invective. But of course the final irony was that he, the most wonderful draughtsman that this country has ever produced, took a rather poor view of drawing; it was, he would say, nothing in itself, a drawing should never be made except with an end in view, it is a preparation for the painting and that is all.

Clive Bell called him a *poseur*, but this surely is not the whole truth of the matter. Certainly Sickert loved to impress, to dazzle, to display that impressive social armour which in the 1890s had enabled him to keep the respect of such redoubtable figures as Whistler, Wilde, Max Beerbohm. In such company it was perhaps wise to mix one's truths and to add a becoming measure of absurdity to one's most firmly held beliefs, to play the fool at times—and this came more easily—to play the charmer. Sickert, the elegant traveller between Mayfair and the Dieppe, via Dieppe, is a very different person from Sickert the painter. As a butterfly folding its wings passes from agitated gaiety to still sobriety, so did he; but the butterfly, which provided that it was armed with a sting made so appropriate an emblem for Whistler, was not really a fit image for his pupil. For Sickert an iceberg might have been a more appropriate icon: all glittering and transparent lucidity above the water level, vast, formidable and incomprehensible below.

Every man to his taste [wrote Sir William Rothenstein, addressing himself with characteristic modesty to Sickert] but had I a little of your charm, your finished manners, your wit and good looks, I should not be painting in a dusty room in the squalidest corner of Chelsea. Nor for that matter should I be laboriously matching the dingy tones of women lying on unwashed sheets, upon cast iron bedsteads.

Rothenstein was puzzled to find Sickert painting aged tarts when he might have been painting youthful duchesses, and we may share his surprise; but in fact the case was even more perplexing, the austerity of Sickert's nature was even greater than such a choice suggests. If Sickert had gone, like Sir Luke Fildes, to the casual ward and peered into the depths of the great social abyss of nineteenth-century England he would have been in a situation in which one can at least shed an honest tear, and which allowed us the luxury of a little noble sentiment. Not a bit of it. The lower depths were far too obviously heartrending for him; he devoted himself not to the squalid but to the seedy. The Camden Town world in which he delighted is shabby, but it is not destitute; the half-smoked whiff, the half-empty decanter of *Bonnet* are not signs of poverty but of vulgarity. The absurdly blooming wallpaper, the overloaded mantelpiece, the gents' outfitting and cheap finery of North London, the dirty plush and tobacco-stained ormolu of the music-halls have today become so enshrined by Sickert's art as to be, for a young artist, untouchably pretty; but to his contemporaries it seemed that he was unutterably perverse. We forget how faithfully he wedded they were to what Sickert called "the distinguished site and the nicely got up young person".

What Sickert rejoiced in was, I think, difficulty. He once said that the most difficult thing in the world to paint is a young face and young faces, not pretty ones, constitute one of his favourite themes; when in a painting such as *Le Chèle Vendéen* we have the essentially dull, almost anecdotal portrait of a rather plain young girl deployed in motion, we have the kind of thing that Sickert most wanted to do.

Even so, there is a further clue to be made: a painter may take the most recalcitrant and the most perplexing subject imaginable and still arrive at an easy accommodation between paint and meaning. Look at a McEvoy or an Orpen or a Wilson Steer, all of them in their ways gifted artists, and observe how deftly, how descriptively they manipulate the brush, how one smooth painted phrase will describe the luminous shadow and the delicate inflection of a face. There are times when Sickert will apply the same graceful solution to his painting, particularly in his townscapes; but again and again we find in his portraits, just when one would expect to find the pleasure of a figure gracefully drawn together by the brush, that he seems wantonly to paint against the contour of the drawing, so that the paint surface becomes a ruthlessly abrasive system of blobs and dashes and abrupt asperities of paint, the whole thing being triumphantly united by the assertiveness of the tonality. Even Degas in his fiercest description of the jaded old hacks of the ballet is less ruthlessly austere.

It is hardly too much to say that in social intercourse Sickert could be as surreal as a character in a play by Oscar Wilde while in painting he had the fierce integrity of an Old Testament prophet. As a result he presents a difficult problem for the biographer and it would seem that if one is to write the painter's life, as distinct from tracing his career as a painter, one must either be very factual or very fanciful.

Denys Sutton is factual. His is a straightforward account of the life written without whimsy or fantasy; better still, it is never marred by the kind of pretentious art criticism which is the ruin of so many books about painters, and in all this we should be grateful. It is disappointingly reticent about Sickert as a teacher, although Robert Emmons offers us a great deal of valuable material; also he fails to do justice to Sickert as a writer, a writer of conspicuous, if constructed, madly parenthetical but high-spirited and very lively prose.

Mr Sutton is parsimonious in his provision of Sickertian anecdotes and in this he shows a certain wisdom, for the life of such a character can easily degenerate into a succession of "good stories", but in avoiding this danger he courts another, that of making the life of a very amusing man much duller than it ought to be. The danger is augmented by an overscrupulous attention to that which, to most of us, seems the least interesting side of Sickert's life, his adventures in "good society". Obviously they should be noted but here they are pursued with an avidity which they hardly seem to merit and, where the records are deficient, Mr Sutton asks us to suppose them. Thus we are continually told that Sickert might possibly have met M Untel or must surely have waited upon Mme de Chose and these speculations produce results which are not happy.

Madame Lemaire enjoyed an enviable social position and her studio in Paris, the entrée to which was by no means easy to gain, was frequented by the cream of Paris society and formed the subject of a name-studded feuilleton contributed by Proust to the *Figaro* (1903) under the signature of "Dominique". She also illustrated his first book, *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*, in 1893. During his trips to Paris Sickert might well have made his bow in her salon and perhaps witnessed the amusing scene sketched by the caricaturist Sem with Reynaldo Hahn at the piano and the Spanish painter Pradelles de Madrazo sharing in the fun.

The trouble is that the reader does not share in the fun; he needs either to be told rather more or rather less.

The other main criticism which suggests itself is that Sickert's life receives a very definite shape from the aesthetic crisis, through which all British painters passed during the years 1910-14 and that to some of us this gives his career a definite and indeed tragic pattern. This configuration of his career is barely indicated here. To this it may fairly be objected that, if the author does not find such a pattern, then it is no criticism that he fails to trace it and certainly, in reading this account, it may seem to many readers that they have over-dramatized events which as here recorded lack drama. Nevertheless it does seem to me that Mr. Sutton's reflections on Sickert's very difficult critical position after the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition could with advantage have been amplified and perhaps more carefully considered.

In 1929 in a piece on Duncan Grant (*The Nation and Athenaeum*, February 16) he made the telling point that Cézanne's influence had not been beneficial for English painting. For instance, Grant was not really like Cézanne and the Post-Impressionists: "Where Cézanne is papery, Duncan's paintings are fat. Where they are skimble skamble Duncan's are round, full and resonant. They have the beautiful heaviness and roundness of the great marbles."

But is this really such a "telling point"? What in fact Sickert is doing is to say that Grant owes nothing to Cézanne (a more extensive quotation would have made this clear) and that, in Sickert's opinion, he is none the worse for that. But, more importantly, this article is but a part of the long rearguard action which Sickert was fighting against Cézanne and against Roger Fry from 1910 onwards. The biographical interest of that campaign arises from the fact that, within his own terms, Sickert was not simply an old-fashioned reactionary but the proponent of a doctrine which made very good sense.

The doctrine which Sickert derived from Whistler and which was profoundly modified by his long intimacy and vast admiration for Degas, a doctrine for which he could find support in the practice of the Old Masters was, as I have already suggested, based upon the idea that a painting should be founded upon an observation of life, an observation made as swiftly as possible so that the original purity of the artist's emotion should not grow stale; this should then be recollected in tranquillity in the studio. It was a realist doctrine and during the first years of the century it allowed not only Sickert but several of his followers to develop a type of art which was pure, honest and beautiful.

It fulfilled Degas's hope that the young would look for new developments in draughtsmanship rather than in colour. The trouble was that, as Degas himself admitted, the young painters in France moved in the opposite direction: their main interest was in colour, and they moved further and further from realism. When, in 1910, English painters began seriously to consider what was happening in France, Sickert's disciples rapidly moved into the enemy's camp and Sickert himself, who had hitherto been the leader of the avant-garde in this country, became the most vocal, and also the most intelligent, opponent of Roger Fry and Clive Bell. The dramatic force of this encounter arose from the fact that this was not a conflict between right and wrong but between right and right. For Sickert the tragedy was that his way of being right could not appeal to a generation which had become enthusiastic about Cézanne, Matisse, Gauguin and Van Gogh. Indeed so strong was the pull in this new direction that Sickert's own painting seems to have lost some of the assurance and sense of direction which it had had before the First World War.

The word "tragedy" is perhaps too strong in this context; Sickert was not a tragic character and his thoroughly enjoyed the polemic to which his attitude gave rise, nor did he—for all his sallies and teasing—see the conflict in personal terms. It was, after all, an agreeable circumstance that both his main theoretical opponents respected and admired him as a painter.

But the slow discovery of his own style in harmony with and then in opposition to Whistler, the triumphant establishment of his mature manner and the recognition which came when the young, seeing in No 19 Fitzroy Street the true centre of British painting, gathered around him, the subsequent catastrophe of the Post-Impressionist Exhibitions and Sickert's long struggle to adjust himself to a new world of which Cézanne, not Degas, was the great god, surely add up to a not uninteresting story. It will, that, Mr Sutton had been able to see his subject's life in these terms.

It is not however for this reason, or not for this reason alone that I feel that, for all its virtues, this is a rather disappointing book; but rather I think because our expectations were so high. The man was so great an artist, his life and times so extraordinary, the wealth of fact and myth so vast and so attractive that one hoped for a masterpiece and this, of course, engenders the censorious an attitude. On the other hand, and for the same reasons, we should be grateful for any factual account. For my part I should have been even more grateful if we could have been provided with footnotes. It is true that the sources are listed in a bibliography, but it would have been convenient to know on which authorities the author has relied. Thus, when he describes a lunch party at No 8 Fitzroy Street we are told that Sickert "arrived in high spirits, greeting Quentin with a cry of 'Génius'".

'Génius' indeed. But whose invention was it? Not mine, I hope.

Sickert's sketch of Quentin Bell, discussed opposite.

Everybody out

By Stephen Koss

G. A. PHILLIPS:
The General Strike
The Politics of Industrial Conflict
388pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £7.95.

Not with a bang but a whimper, the General Strike of 1926 ended as abruptly and, to most observers, as inexplicably as it had begun. No one, with the possible exception of a few hard-line politicians who had sought to hasten the inevitability and thereby to confront and subordinate the insurgent forces of trade unionism, was prepared for the nationwide stoppage on May 3. Fewer still anticipated its swift collapse on the twelfth. Stanley Baldwin, whose habitual indecisiveness served only to enhance his reputation for impartiality, was as much caught off guard as were the harried officials of the TUC, who reluctantly accepted responsibility without control.

Literally a nine days' wonder, the General Strike generated passions that militated against any realistic assessment of its significance. Contemporaries, variously motivated, found it mutually convenient to obscure its causes and to exaggerate its effects. Historians, following suit, have tended to portray the episode either in the most garish colours as a post-Lenten carnival or else in sombre black and white as a pitched battle between the classes.

G. A. Phillips's monograph is therefore to be welcomed as a conscientious attempt to distil fact from legend. Discounting "strike propaganda, and much subsequent historiography", the author has effectively disposed of one familiar generalization after another. Similarly, he has ignored the shop-worn anecdotes which were the staple of previous accounts. The result is a detailed analysis, painstakingly researched and judiciously argued, of industrial relationships at a critical juncture.

At the risk of appearing ungrateful, there is cause for complaint that the baby has been discarded with the bathwater. Concentrating on the interplay between institutions and between the objectives which they evolved, sometimes spontaneously, Dr Phillips has provided a curiously lifeless rendering that conveys little sense of the human drama and pays scant attention to the conflicting motives of participants. As he himself candidly admits, his "work may not prove easily digestible". It is not that his interpretation is hard to swallow so much as that the ingredients, served virtually raw, require some strenuous mastication.

The structure of the book, with sub-divisions within sub-divisions, compounds the reader's difficulty. One must have prior acquaintance with the protagonists, who are usually left inadequately identified, to relate them to one another; one would have to know the story about the "famous Plymouth football match" (between police and strikers) for Dr Phillips's allusions to mean anything; likewise, the untutored will not easily distinguish between Red Friday and Black Friday or disentangle the SIC (Special Industrial Committee) from the SOC (Strike Organization Committee). References, many of which are explanatory as well as bibliographical, are interred in a mass grave. Most seriously, however, the subtlety of Dr Phillips's argument is not reflected in his literary style. Without disputing his logic, one may nevertheless deprecate his tortuous prose:

> If the TUC fought the General Strike with little semblance of purpose, the government fought it with none at all, save the sterile and pointless satisfaction of punishing an apologetic militancy and the freedom gained to continue to ignore responsibilities it found too laborious to assume.

These stylistic deficiencies are especially surprising in a book that belongs to a series—"Radical Men, Movements and Ideas"—whose earlier titles have set a high standard for ordered lucidity. Unlike his companions in the series, Dr Phillips apparently does not aspire to a popular readership. On the other hand, for the benefit of "those students of recent British history who may be required" to consult his book "for the purpose of answering essay questions conventionally addressed to matters of cause and consequence", he has taken the trouble to specify which sections and passages contain "the framework of its argument". What could be more defeatist? The material which Dr Phillips has assembled is sufficiently important to deserve a careful reading, no less than a clear exposition.

Making extensive use of official minutes and reports, Dr Phillips has chronicled the changes that occurred in trade union organization, attitudes, and tactics. A general strike, prematurely threatened by working-class agitators during the Chartist disturbances and again during the franchise campaign of 1866-67, acquired practicability "only in the light of structural developments in the movement since the late 1880s, well before the term became current or the phenomenon recognizable". The pre-1914 syndicalists contributed a litany of slogans, but otherwise exerted little direct influence on the events of the next decade. Instead it was

> the rapid numerical growth of the union movement during the postwar boom, in conjunction with the weakness of the Labour Party in parliament after the 1918 election, [that] created an evident temptation to use industrial action for purposes hitherto unconsidered.

Until 1920, against a background of full employment and rising union membership, organized labour relied on traditional methods, collective bargaining and sectional stoppages, which worked well enough. Then, in October of that year, "a climatic change occurred". Deserted by the railwaymen and the transport workers, their erstwhile partners in the Triple Alliance, the miners were forced to submit to an unsatisfactory wage settlement. The demand grew more insistent for a general strike—Tom Mann naively supposed that "one week would be enough" — and, in 1924, the TUC adopted a proposal to this effect "as an inexpensive gesture of solidarity". The following year, the establishment of an Industrial Alliance seemed to presage a new militancy. Yet Dr Phillips, taking his cue from Ernest Bevin, does not jump to obvious conclusions. "The Alliance was not conceived . . . to fulfil any single purpose", he has insisted. "The enthusiasm for joint action which it revealed was neither novel nor unqualified."

An examination of conditions in the ailing coal industry prompts Dr Phillips to criticize the studied vagueness of the Samuel Report and the abject failure of the Government to take remedial action. But the most successful portions of his book are those devoted to the conduct of the strike on both sides, including the rival publicity machines that were hastily improvised. The author does not emphasize, much less exploit, the elements of comedy and irony. (The gaffe of the *British Gazette*, the Government's newspaper, in reporting the large will of a north-east coal-owner is recorded only among the references.) Nevertheless, the many underlying paradoxes of the situation do not go unnoticed. Although it was obvious that "no general strike could be *wholly* effective which did not threaten civil war or inflict hardship upon the working class itself", the General Council of the TUC was quick to proffer assistance in the maintenance of vital services. Although Baldwin played a "decisive" part in "the Cabinet's failure to produce any fruitful suggestions during the course of negotiations", and indeed must bear personal responsibility for the punitive intent of the Trade Disputes Act of 1927, he somehow retained his "imperishable reputation as a peace-lover". Although the General Council might well have been dissuaded from strike action by government agents either "more enterprising or more machiavellian in negotiation", it emerged from the ordeal "sure that the enterprise had been morally justified", the continuing lock-out of the miners notwithstanding.

But doubtless the most remarkable feature of the General Strike was its "almost total absence of revolutionary attributes". The Government might depict itself as the defender of the constitution, but neither political nor social institutions stood in any serious danger. "The general strike had never been regarded as a revolutionary weapon", but rather as a defensive mechanism, according to Dr Phillips. "Its lineaments were moulded by its confined and modest purposes."

Those who stood at the periphery were more prompt to learn its lessons than those who were actively engaged. Along with J. R. Clynes and, for that matter, certain communist spokesmen, Ramsay MacDonald perceived that a general strike was fundamentally irrelevant for industrial purposes: "It is clumsy and ineffectual. It has no goal which when reached can be regarded as victory. . . . I hope that the result will be a thorough reconsideration of trade union tactics." MacDonald was subsequently gratified by a shift from industrial to political activity, and by a refinement in trade-union vocabulary.

"In the end", Dr Phillips has concluded, "the General Strike merits historical study less for what it changed in the labour movement, than for what it revealed of the unchanging." On that score, his survey makes a particularly valuable contribution. But if, in the last analysis, the results were decidedly meagre, surely that imposes a great obligation to explain what all the fuss was about.

Speaking for the workers

By H. A. Clegg

J. DAVID EDELSTEIN and MALCOLM WARNER:
Comparative Union Democracy
Organization and Opposition in British and American Unions
378pp. Allen and Unwin. £14.50.

In *Union Democracy*, published in 1956, S. M. Lipset, M. Trow and J. Coleman replaced Michels's "iron law of oligarchy" with an almost equally pessimistic theory of trade-union government. In contrast to Michels they conceded that democracy—which they defined as "the institutionalization of opposition"—is possible in trade unions, but their investigation of the International Typographical Union in America indicated that the conditions of union democracy are hard to meet. Opposition is institutionalized in the ITU through an acknowledged two-party system, and no other union possesses all the factors which Lipset and his colleagues "identified" as promoting this form of government in the ITU.

By comparison J. David Edelstein and Malcolm Warner are optimists. While they accept the Lipset view that union democracy entails the possibility of union leaders being defeated in elections, they believe this possibility exists wherever there are close electoral contests for top union posts. It does not require a two-party system, nor even electoral defeats. It is enough that close-run votes remind the leaders of the possibility of defeat to make them responsive to the wishes of their members.

Lipset's pessimistic list of factors conducive to union democracy concentrates on the social structure of the printing industry, emphasizing the high degree of social contact among printing workers both on and off the job; the security, high status and intrinsic interest of their work; their relations with management and the relative lack of bureaucratization in printing establishments. There is not much that trade unions can do to develop such features into the industry as a which its members work if they are not there already. By contrast Professor Edelstein and Professor Warner list features of union constitutions which unions can adopt or reject as they please—although of course the social structure of their occupations may predispose their members to particular constitutional arrangements. The list includes methods of voting, methods of selecting full-time officers, the structure of the union hierarchy, regional organization, and the composition of union conferences.

The central task which they set themselves is to test the relationship between these and other features of union government and the strength of electoral opposition for "the top and next-to-top offices" in fifty-one American and thirty-one British unions. A battery of mathematical tests shows that most items in the list turn out to be related to the proportion of votes going to the leading opposition candidates. Among the items which seem to be strongly related to electoral opposition in British unions are: the existence of two top posts of roughly equal standing (such as the Engineers' presidency and secretaryship) as against a single top post; a relatively large number of elected national officers (to provide competitors for the top posts); the power to discuss or suspend the top officers, and the effectiveness of the system of appeal for members aggrieved by union decisions (both checks on the abuse of power).

But there are problems in this approach. The thirty-one British unions include sixteen which (at the time of the study) held periodic elections for top posts, and fifteen in which the successful candidates had permanent tenure. The theory was "*strongly* supported" by the evidence from the first group, but received "*no* general support" from the second group in which the correlations were weak and as often as not in the wrong direction. This is not surprising, for the size of the opposition vote in an election which may occur only once in a couple of decades—and in which the succession of the assistant secretary to the secretary's post is in many instances a foregone conclusion—can hardly be the measure of union democracy. Moreover, the theory has no application to the many British unions, including some of the larger—in which the executive body appoints to the top posts.

It does not follow that unions which do not hold periodic elections for top posts are to be written off as undemocratic. Their members may be able to influence policy through elected conferences and executive committees, and by other means besides. Consequently an adequate theory of union democracy cannot rely on a single measure of democracy. It must have room for several measures, and the relationship between all of them and the key features of union constitutions must be tested before what the authors call the "organizational theory of trade union democracy" can be established. They deserve credit for their challenge to orthodox pessimism, but theirs is no more than half a theory to put in its place.

This defect may be linked to their anxiety to bring relations in trade unions "into the sunlight of the sociological open research in British unions", although the two case-studies which they include deal with the Engineers and the Mineworkers. If they had been more ready to acknowledge the importance of factions they might have paid more attention to the democratic process in conferences the executive committees.

Besides the content of their argument, its presentation also deserves comment. Any book dealing with a number of unions in two countries is bound to contain errors—but not so many. Someone should have spotted the incomprehensible sentences, and also those which cannot mean what they say. There is no serious attempt to explain to the layman what the mathematical analysis is about, although that could easily have been done. Instead he is advised to skip the section which provides the evidence for the tests he is asked to accept. *Comparative Union Democracy* consists of separate and disparate pieces, and, no more than perfunctory efforts have been made to fit them together. The many students and practitioners who should read this book deserve better treatment.

Jo's other sisters

By Patricia Beer

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT:
Behind a Mask
The Unknown Thrillers
Edited by Madeleine Stern
277pp. W. H. Allen. £4.50.

Little Women is a treatise on the repression or suppression of the instincts. The March household fizzes with bottled-up violence. Marmee, by her own account, has been a lifelong sufferer from murderous impulses, which she has remorselessly—and wrongheadedly we would of course now think—schooled herself to check by a system of folding her lips tight together, going out of the room and giving herself a little shake for being so weak and wicked. In this campaign of suppression she has enlisted her husband who puts his finger on his lips and looks at her with a kind but sober face when she is about to burst out. The little women themselves are surprisingly aggressive: that is, their aggression is perfectly consistent with realism; the surprise comes from the way it is glossed over. It is true that Jo's attempt to murder Amy, when she lets her skate on ice she knows to be thin, is given proper weight, but Jo's dropping of the infant Amy into the coal-box, thereby permanently flattening her nose, is presented as a comic accident. Amy's burning of Jo's irreplaceable book of stories is treated leniently and when darling Beth ("Little Tranquillity") lets her canary starve and he is found "with his little claws pathetically extended, as if imploring the food for want of which he had died", we are expected not to censure but to condole.

Behind a Mask consists of four novelettes written by Louisa May Alcott in the 1860s, the decade which culminated in the publication of *Little Women*, inside the four righteous and cosy walls of which she was to be encapsulated for ever. In these four stories hardly anyone suppresses anything except for reasons of calculated self-interest and with an eye to the main chance. Adults hurl their fellow creatures into deeper gulfs than coal-boxes and imperfectly frozen lakes. Siblings have no inhibitions about attacking each other. In the title-story Edward sees the girl he loves turning to Another, who happens to be his brother Gerald:

> In a paroxysm of blind wrath, he caught up a large pruning knife left there by the gardener and would have dealt his brother a fatal blow had he not warded it off with his arm. The stroke fell. . . . The blood poured from a deep wound in his arm, showing by its rapid flow that an artery had been severed.

Whereas in *Little Women* everyone spends twenty-four hours a day trying to be good, in *Behind a Mask* most people devote themselves to being bad. Jean Muir, heroine of the title-story, for instance, sits up late at night in her room, drinking, as she works out her unedifying plans. But the stories are by no means totally amoral. Although the bounds of morality are further flung than we are accustomed to in nineteenth-century fiction, there are limits. There is a moral Tom Tiddler's ground where people may go too far and get caught. The heroine of "Pauline's Passion and Punishment" sets out to avenge herself on a faithless lover, and is getting along splendidly with her nasty machinations, apparently with the author's entire approval, until she oversteps the mark and, as the title states, is punished. Sir Jasper, in "The Abbot's Ghost, or Maurice Treherne's Temptation", also goes too far. His card-sharping and forgery, in which he implicates and ruins his innocent cousin, end in his being thrown from his horse and killed.

However vindictive and self-seeking the heroines may be they have a code of their own and there is something touching about the way they play the game at last. Jean Muir and Edith Snowdon (of "The Abbot's Ghost") cunningly and cynically entrap old men for their money and social position. But when these little women promise to be good wives we believe them. It is disarming: had Becky Sharp been kind to Rawdon we should have forgiven her everything.

The liveliness of the women characters and the spirited part they play in the stories contribute greatly to our enjoyment of the books. And they do not have to be hoydens. Assuming, if necessary, a touch of rouge and a few strategically placed false teeth they can be beautiful, graceful nineteenth-century women. But the stories have other virtues: brisk dialogue, strong plots and genuine suspense: Jean very nearly fails, Pauline very nearly succeeds. And there is always someone to identify with—who wants to be Marmee nowadays; or Jo? The backgrounds all seem exotic, whether the action takes place in the tropics or England: ghosts, blood and thunder know no frontiers.

And there is an abundance of all three. Alcott owes a harmless, indeed a flattering, debt to the worst excesses of the nineteenth-century British novel, and particularly those of Dickens and Charlotte Brontë:

> The winter dusk gathered early . . . . A loud, long shriek echoed through the hall. The young ladies clung to one another aghast, for mortal terror was in the cry, and a deadly silence followed it.

It is implausibly explained that a servant is having a fit. The gentlemen appear on the scene, to take charge, counsel and console. They are surely headed by Mr Rochester in his dressing gown.

Madeleine Stern offers a helpful introduction. Some of her phrases are rather unfortunate (Alcott "took her pen as her bridegroom" and thereafter "lived in her inkstand") but her account of the circumstances in which the stories were composed, and of the periodicals in which they were first published, is very interesting.

Oddly godly

By Catherine Tennant

JANE GILLESPIE:
A Real House
224pp. Peter Davies. £3.50.

Fresh and keen from a Christian commune in the depths of Gloucestershire, ex-drop-out Simon Baxter arrives at dusk before the arts department of an unnamed northern university. Although "not of the temperament to thrust himself anywhere", he manages to make his way, with the help of God, through the eddies of plastic bags, scraps of paper, leaves and cigarette packets covering the campus, and moves in on a group of students at their riverside digs. We follow Simon through his religious musings and his attempts to bring the students to God. For a while religion fades as Simon finds his "true" self with the help of Paul, a "soggy" thirty-eight-year-old biographer and receptive with a mother complex. But this wonderful new friendship becomes hard to handle when Simon suddenly takes himself off to Paul's flat "putting his coffee cup on a pouffe by the fender": "Does Paul love me? . . . *Does* he?" This idea not proving congenial, before we know where we are Simon has gone back to God, abandoning the now crushed Paul, and everyone else besides. Religion, it seems, is a pretty selfish occupation, and the younger generation, who pay no hypocrisy to hypocritical adult values, do well to avoid it. When one of the group commits suicide they feel no guilt—"they had not been educated into it"—and Simon's self-questionings are merely "morbid self-dramatization". Nobody—God, parents, students, or ex-drop-outs—can communicate, and it appears that the most that can be hoped for is to share the fate of Simon's neglected mother and father: "They lay on their backs staring at the invisible ceiling. They shared at least the difficulty of communication, if neither of them wholly sympathized with it in the other." Jane Gillespie's concern with lack of communication unfortunately communicates itself only fitfully to the reader.

The squalor and the pity

By Paul Bailey

GIORGIO BASSANI:
The Smell of Hay
Translated by William Weaver
193pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £3.95.

Giorgio Bassani was almost forty when he began writing fiction. His must have been a long and difficult literary apprenticeship—a matter of finding a style with which to convey his sense of what James called "the infinite pity and tragedy of all the past". The past, in Bassani's case, meant his own boyhood and youth in provincial Italy between the wars, and the pity and tragedy were those that faced a young Jew who had come of age at roughly the same time as Italian fascism. The painful events of that time had to be recollected in the disinterested state of mind conducive to the creation of imaginative literature.

Giorgio Bassani's novels and stories tell one a great deal about the Giorgio Bassani who grew up in Ferrara in the 1920s and 1930s. He is, unashamedly, an autobiographical novelist—a writer determined to come to grips with a self that was. Yet there is no breast-beating, no self-justification, no easy agonizing in his work. The narrative tone is measured, ironic, sceptical; the narrator a shrewd observer of the society about him: he is more "eye" than "I". One enjoys the company of this decent and studious boy, youth and man.

The Smell of Hay is made up of ten stories—all written in the last few years—and the early novella *The Gold-Rimmed Eyeglasses (Gli occhiali d'oro* was previously translated, by Isabel Quigly, as *The Gold-Rimmed Spectacles*—William Weaver's translation is of a revised text). I suspect that the reader coming fresh to Bassani will not be greatly impressed by the stories, finding them slight, anecdotal, too allusive. To be properly appreciated, some knowledge of the earlier books—particularly *Five Stories of Ferrara*—is necessary: deeper acquaintance with the milieu adds to the pleasure these brief, laconic tales afford. The title-story, in particular, and another called "Rawhide" are poetic distillations of Ferrara. Bassani has dwelt on at length in his novels. The new reader, though, can do no better than to start with *The Gold-Rimmed Eyeglasses*. More than the rightly famous *Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (in Britain and America Bassani is still being touted as "the author of . . . ", as though he had written nothing else), this bleak story strikes me as his masterpiece.

When it first appeared nearly twenty years ago, *The Gold-Rimmed Eyeglasses* was compared with Mann's *Death in Venice*. Superficially, they have something in common: both of them describe the disintegration of a hitherto respectable man who becomes obsessed with a physically beautiful, and finally unattainable, boy. There the resemblance begins and ends. Mann's novella is an allegory about the artist's need to create works of beauty as complete as nature's; Bassani's deals with loneliness and isolation in a stiflingly repressive bourgeois society. The young narrator is slowly and subtly cast aside by his "friends" when it becomes clear that Mussolini is going to emulate Hitler's anti-semitism; the homosexual doctor, Athos Fadigati, loses his job when he makes his desires too obvious in public—the two men maintain an awkward, suspicious relationship which grows in understanding as society's ostracism increases. Bassani never satirizes the persecutors—he sees them, rather, as individual victims of a despicable regime. The book is at its most subtle and suggestive when it is dealing with these time-serving, cowardly people: the ambitious young student, Nino Bottecchia, who ultimately cannot refuse to "salute with the upraised right arm", and the social-climbing Signora Lavezzoli coming over the virtues of Il Duce, are the creations of a master. So, too, is the character of Deliliers, the youth to whom Fadigati gives both love and money—his synthetic, swaggering charm is horribly recognizable. One of those high-class tarts for ever insisting on his "maleness", his type can still be encountered on the Via Veneto or in the Piazza Navona. *The Gold-Rimmed Eyeglasses* is as quietly authoritative on the subject of moral squalor as it is on the rarer, but equally lasting, one of human dignity.

News from nowhere

By Anne Duchêne

J. B. PRIESTLEY:
Found, Lost, Found
or The English Way of Life
135pp. Heinemann. £2.90.

The Happy Dream
35pp. Cheltenham: The Whittington Press. Cloth £12, leather £45.

A vexation that the more typical—and more interesting—of the two books by J. B. Priestley appearing this month should be cordoned off inside a limited edition. This is *The Happy Dream*, a short essay straight from the old fumed oak. *Found, Lost, Found*, by contrast, is a novel which makes a very mild venture indeed into the picaresque and, more disappointingly, does not live up to its subtitle. Its hero, Dekkor, is a civil servant, divorced, drinking quantities of gin to "keep him floating through the day" in London's jungle, where his "bamboo hut" is a West Ken bedsit. "There isn't another steamer for a couple of months, and I'm waiting for news from home", he says at the outset: "It's a terrible thing to know you're at home and yet to feel you're waiting for news from home."

Unfortunately—one would rather he had grappled with fate in West Ken — he meets a young woman who says that if he wants her, as he does, he must look for her, somewhere in England, as she is going to ground. The search occasions many encounters, with her employers and friends, her abundance of aunts, and people in trains, the most plausible of whom is a gentleman hoping to smuggle gin called "Happy Jappy". The colloquy embraces such stock comic properties as left-wing student demonstrators, a right-wing garden-party, and a French film director. The "English way of life" is more complex, now, than this.

The Happy Dream, on the other hand, allows us to overhear something frequently fruitful, and always agreeable, which is Mr Priestley knocking about among his own thoughts. He had, recently, an intensely happy—blissful—dream. He was idling, first, around an undifferentiated Cambridge, in faceless, congenial company; then climbing a slope in an undifferentiated Isle of Wight; always under a reddish mild, kind sun; his experienced mind in a young body. The conjunction of all these engendered a joy so potent it has not yet been dispelled by daily life. Mr Priestley, an old hand at dreams, deals with Jung and Dunne and the other subliminal cartography briefly and *con brio*. "We know fairly well", he says here, "a body quite different from the one we habitually cart around with us"; a dream-body which, for all its limitations, eccentric bore it was, but ordinary

Frontier Americanado

By Walter Allen

ELAINE STEINBECK and ROBERT WALLSTEN (Editors):
Steinbeck: A Life in Letters
905pp. Heinemann. £8.

This book consists of some 850 letters, together with brief extracts from many more, written during the course of Steinbeck's writing life and selected, according to the editors, from several thousand. They show a man who was a born writer, grew up, lived, and died a writer, "breathing, feeling, thinking, speaking, performing every action of his life, only as that votary". One may wonder at the number of letters he wrote, but as a young man he lived remote from metropolitan centres, was inhibited by the telephone and, most important, wrote letters each morning as a means of warming himself up for the day's stint of composition. He told a friend: "There is a difference between writing letters and answering them." In this collection we get the letters rather than the answers.

In 1936, a novel of his (it seems to have been either *Tortilla Flat* or *In Dubious Battle*) having been published in London, he wrote to Elizabeth Otis, his literary agent, who was then Miss Otis to him but was to become one of his closest friends and confidantes:

> English criticism always amazes me because they consider us so foreign. I never think of the English as so strange. There is a Mexican word—Americanado. It seems literally Americaned but by connotation queer, unusual, unpalatable, incomprehensible, crazy. That is the way the English think of us too.

One sees what he meant, for no American writer could have been more *Americanado*. Despite his Californian origins, he reminds one of mid-nineteenth-century Easterners. He was the victim of the work-ethic; he knew this, saw its absurdity and lamented that it should be so; but when he was not working he was guiltily miserable. His whole background in life and letters made him, inevitably, different from any of his English contemporaries. In a letter written towards the end of his life he writes:

> When I was sixteen I differed with my parents and walked away and got a job on a ranch where they didn't give a damn whether I was sixteen or not. I slept in the bunk house with all the other hands, got up at four-thirty, cleaned my stall, and saddled or harnessed horses depending on the job, ate my beefsteak for breakfast and went to work, and the work day was over when you could no longer see. I learned a great deal on that job, things I have been using ever since. I got a sense of values I have never lost but above all I became free. Once I could do that, make my pay with my own hands, nobody could ever push me around again. Also I learned about men, how some are good and some are bad, how most are some of both. And I learned about money, and how hard it is to get. On that ranch there wasn't one soul who knew my family or gave a damn. It wouldn't have been so good if there had been. I think that until a boy is put out on his own, he hasn't a chance to be a man. A kind of pride comes with it and a kind of humility also. I think the best gift I could give my son is that fierce sense of independence. Very few American kids ever get the chance to have it.

Even fewer English kids. But Steinbeck was born in California when frontier-values still held, born, in other words, in the Promised Land. Because of this, it duplicated, for Steinbeck at least, the values of the eastern seaboard at an earlier time. He was the heir as a writer to Whitman and Emerson. He contained multitudes and he contradicted himself, and at times one is tempted to say of his work what Lanier said of Whitman's: "Because a prairie is wide, therefore debauchery is admirable, and because the Mississippi is long, therefore every American is God."

His art, in the first and more fruitful half of his career, was based on a paradox; he was an individualist preaching a variant of Whitman's "en-masse" and Emerson's over-soul. The early letters contain many statements of this, the clearest being his belief "that the group is an individual as boundaried, as diagnosable, as dependent on its units and as independent of its units' individual natures, as the human unit, or man, is dependent on his cells and yet is independent of them".

"The Terwilligers, Ozark family, Arkansas, 1938"—were photographed by the painter, Ben Shahn, as part of his work for the Farm Security Administration during the Depression. Over a hundred of his photographs, selected from more than 3,000 in the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, are included in The Photographic Eye of Ben Shahn *(147pp. Harvard University Press. $15), introduced by Davis Pratt and with a foreword by Archibald MacLeish, who describes a meeting with the artist at Harvard. Although the photographs—studies of American small-town life, of impoverished farming people, of the early years of the Depression in New York City, and of prison life—show great technical mastery in addition to an intuitive sympathy with the subjects, Shahn himself believed photography to be at least as important morally as artistically. To record and communicate was his aim, as well as "to abstract the forms" behind what he saw; in this respect he was influenced by Cartier-Bresson, whom he knew in New York in 1933.*

The belief is dramatized particularly in *In Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath* and it gives his characters and actions a dignity of their own; if his human beings are scarcely distinguished from animals, at least they have the dignity of animals. It is when they must be individualized that the mind revolts, for then Steinbeck's language becomes less than adequate and suggests the phony, as at Casy's prayer over Grampa Joads corpse:

> This ol' man jus' lived a life an' jus' died out of it. I don't know whether he was good or bad, but that don't matter much. He was alive, and that's what matters. An' now he's dead, an' that don't matter. Heard a fella tell a poem one time, an' he says: "All that lives is holy." Got to thinkin', and purty soon it means more than the words say....

It is with such considerations in mind that one begins to ask of this selection of Steinbeck's letters questions it cannot answer. One feels the need in other words, for an accompanying biography, which the editors' running commentary does not satisfy. In the first half of his life Steinbeck's absorbing interest outside writing was marine biology, and his notions of group-man seem to have come from this.

But here the letters give us very little detailed information, and no clear picture emerges of his mentor in biology, Edward C. Ricketts, who seems to have been the greatest single influence on him. In this sense, the book's subtitle is a misnomer; we need a life of Steinbeck in order fully to understand the letters.

Nowhere is this more evident than when we try to come to some sort of conclusion about his marriages. He was, it is plain, a great appreciator of women. He was married three times and divorced twice, and each time the divorce comes to us as a shock, for the letters have given us no hint that the ladies had feet of clay and we are unprepared for the bitterness of Steinbeck's disillusion. It is as though the letters become a stream-of-consciousness novel, something like Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*; Steinbeck is his own hero, and his art is such that we identify with him.

Steinbeck's second marriage marked a change in his life. It coincided with his greatest success and may indeed have been a consequence of it; and it took him from California to New York, which he hated at first but was later to love.

Success also turned an intensely private man into touched personal publicity into a public figure. Mrs Roosevelt took him up after the publication of the controversial and scandalous *The Grapes of Wrath*. The war came, and on occasion Steinbeck felt it incumbent upon him to advise the president, and continued to do from time to time for the rest of his life. He had kind of avuncular relationship with Mrs Kennedy after the assassination of her husband; he was a close friend of Adlai Stevenson, for whom he wrote speeches; and later he went on terms of amiability with President Johnson. He went to Russia semi-officially, and, later, to Vietnam, where, having at first supported the war, he found he was opposed to it.

He was suspicious of his own success. He feared the conferment on him of the Nobel Prize as a "kiss of death"; he wrote, before he had been offered it: "I should be scared to death to receive it... it has seemed to me that the receivers never do a good nor courageous piece of work afterward. Maybe it makes them respectable and a writer can't dare to be respectable."

He seems to have been protected against the dangers of success by a native sweetness in him, a sweetness one feels in his books and which renders his sentimentality curiously innocent. He grew gracefully and bore the ills of age stoically, and though he thought he was manic-depressive he was cheerful more often than not; some of these letters are very funny.

The most noteworthy feature of the second half of his career was his passion for Sir Thomas Malory and *Le Morte d'Arthur*. It was his ambition to be the Malory of the twentieth century, for he aimed at putting the Arthurian story into modern speech consonant with the dignity of its theme, as Malory had done in the fifteenth century. In this he did not succeed, but in the attempt brought the Steinbecks to England, to Bruton in Somerset where they lived for six months fully in the Somerset spirit of the countryside, and, on the evidence of the letters, these months were the happiest of his life.

Victors and vanquished

By Philip Taylor

JOHN SELBY:
The Conquest of the American West
270pp Allen and Unwin. £5.95

On the jacket is a Main Street scene with wagons, and the finest photograph within shows a prospector panning for gold; but John Selby uses the word "conquest" in a narrow sense. The first quarter of his pages tell the story of the Ohio valley in the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth — the American West for young George Washington, Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clark and Anthony Wayne. One chapter outlines the Louisiana Purchase, describes the Lewis and Clark expedition, then comes back east to the War of 1812 and the campaigns of Harrison and Jackson against the Indians. After shorter chapters on mountain men and Mormons, the book turns to the 1830s and Texas (principally the Alamo and San Jacinto), then to California (one third of the chapter on Frémont's expeditions); then to miners. The last two chapters (one sixth of the book) treat the subjugation of the Plains Indians, though the episodes given most prominence are the Indian successes against Fetterman and Custer. A very brief conclusion touches on Oklahoma and the war of 1898, and ends with Hawaiian and Alaskan statehood. One conquest is singled out, and a narrow list of conquerors.

There were others. The early French in their birch-bark canoes, and Jesuits enduring martyrdom, are equally eligible for inclusion, for the conquest began long before there was a United States. Backwoodsmen making clearings with the axe, Methodist circuit-riders, wagon-masters and steamboat captains, storekeepers and editors, bankers and railroad tycoons, industrial Workers of the World organizers, schoolmistresses and whores—all these would qualify to take the stage. In the process of conquest—that more century from the Appalachians to the Pacific—Americans of colonial stock, French and Scots from Canada, Irish and Germans, Norwegians and Czechs, Mexicans and Chinese and many others took part; and the victims included not only rash military commanders but prospectors who wandered all their lives without striking it rich; immigrants who mourned their move from home, and frontier mothers who died too early from excessive toil and too many births.

No scholar in a single book can include them all with any hope of success; so one may devise a single theory to simplify the pattern, while another will play safe by describing a single railroad or industry or town. Major Selby's book is written to a different unifying principle, that of "conquest". It is honest; it is based on a serious, though not very full, bibliography; its index is adequate; the "sketchmaps" are clear, though the one on page eighteen gives Lake Champlain an outlet to the Connecticut river. The text is accurate, but I would argue, treats too few topics, and even those in too narrow a fashion.

Jedediah Smith appears, but not as explorer. The Mormons are described accurately (though Brigham Young came to Britain in 1840, not 1837), but only in a brief anecdote about a recent personal experience does Major Selby allow anything of the character of Mormon faith to show through. Little of the political context of Western growth is discussed. More surprising, neither text nor maps confront the reader with any sense of the pressures from geographical or climatic conditions. Most surprising of all, soldiers are presented only when fighting, not when patrolling, surveying, organizing public works, enduring garrison duty, or deserting—perhaps because nowhere do the rank-and-file appear.

Major Selby does not criticize or judge. He narrates, with a lack of emphasis that goes to extremes. The very last words of *The Conquest of the American West* are characteristic:

> The above states, and the others which form the present United States, are shown on Map 18 together with the date of accession and the present population [figures which are in fact omitted]. This completes the story of the conquest of the West and of American expansion up to the present time (1974).

In his foreword, Ray Billington commends the book as a sober introduction, highly suitable for British readers, to an over-romanticized episode in modern history. The comment is just, though it is to be hoped that readers will go on to books written on an ampler scale—not least Professor Billington's own *Far Western Frontier 1830-1860*. Major Selby has left out the romance, but he has trapped himself firmly within the same range of subject-matter as the one that Billington condemns.

May Death Not Be the Fall

May death not be the fall that takes you in
That lures you from the midway to his tent
All Holly Molly for a squeeze
Of majesty of end of everything and known
The slither feather of his name

May death not kiss you to the darkness and the freaks
Avoiding all the hot exhaustion of the room
The breath and bootlegs prismed by the light
That blue calf slippering the womb
Below the pig gun, ripper knife, and tongue

May death fail to amuse you with his show
That naked dancer with her lips upon the snake
Forgetting grace, the morning by the sun
When down I touched the stomach of a dead
And held it there
And it was cold and concave, smooth and whole

Mark Lee

Temporary brilliancies

By David Bromwich

A. R. AMMONS:
Diversifications
98pp. New York: Norton. $6.95.

HOWARD MOSS:
Buried City
56pp. New York: Atheneum. $6.95.

Of the American poets now at work A. R. Ammons is among the most warmly admired. His first book did not appear until the mid-1950s, but his *Collected Poems* (1972) ran to several hundred pages, two more volumes have followed it, and these facts alone tell part of the story of Mr Ammons's appeal. The American public takes special encouragement from an artist who does a great deal of whatever he does. This bias, a salve or strictly quantitative version of *exuberance is beauty*, has its source in the tradition of Emerson. There is no reason for an Emersonian poem to start, because Emerson identified the creative impulse with an experience of the sublime in nature that occurs wholly by chance.

But, once started, there is no reason for an Emersonian poem to stop, because the experience of self-renewal that issues in works of art has no end. Mr Ammons is prolific to a fault: his work exhibits the great strengths and great weaknesses that one would expect from an extreme and confident exemplar of his tradition. Yet what he wants his poetry to do he occasionally makes it do. The observed details of a life are so ordered that the reader feels it is his life, and returns from the poem astonished and properly chastened.

A notable trait in Mr Ammons is his fondness for abstractions. He cares very little for the effort of a generation of critics to read "general" expressions out of the language of poetry. And it is true that abstract words have their own peculiar poetry; it was Emerson who spoke of "heavens deep with worlds". Mr Ammons's besetting flaw, however, is that his admiration for abstract words, both received and invented, operates quite independently of his ability to bring them to life. "Consistencies", he begins an early poem, "rise/and ride/the mind down/hard routes/walled/with no outlet and so/to open a variable geography,/ proliferate / possibility, here is this dune fest". Idiosyncratic usage of this kind is not helped by Mr Ammons's obscurity of syntax: one has to go a long way into the poem before even its setting is plain. On a sand dune, at the beach, in fair weather, Mr Ammons records an uncanny consolation he took from the shifting and yet enduring life around him.

> And by the time he is ready to close he is filled with the particularity of things. He can say, as from a height, "earth brings to grief/much in an hour that sang leaped, swished,/yet keeps a round/ quiet turning,/ beyond loss or gain,/ beyond concern for the separate reach", and it is the right note, since the poem has managed to give these these words their weight. The puzzles, and rewards here are typical; so is the title, "Saliences". When he has a subject at all, Mr Ammons is usually writing a poem in this vein, about the saliences of nature. His work belongs to an American genre of which the most familiar examples are perhaps William Cullen Bryant's "To a Waterfowl" and Frost's "Design".

The answer nature gives, when asked to supply some final account of its own workings, is often far from what was wanted, though it is always what cannot be changed: hence the moral complexity of the genre. Mr Ammons's contributions to it are distinctive. "Corsons Inlet", "Gravelly Run", "The City limits", and the dedicatory verses in *Sphere*. These are his major poems, and something of the power they share can be felt in the opening lines of "Gravelly Run".

> I don't know somehow it seems
> sufficient
> to see and hear whatever coming
> and going is,
> losing the self to the victory
> of stones and trees,
> of bending sandpit lakes, crescent
> round groves of dwarf pine:
> for it is not so much to know the self
> as to know it as it is known
> by galaxy and cedar cone,
> as if birth had never found it
> and death could never end it.

That "as if" in a single phrase reveals Mr Ammons as a doubter who cannot be sure in his doubt: by some such token one recognizes a true poet.

Many of the poems in *Diversifications* are bad enough to drive a curious reader away from Mr Ammons's work forever. Yet his poetry, from the start, has maintained a precarious tension between the fact observed and the fact endlessly pondered; and his impulse, when the first kind of activity fails him, is not to write less but to move ahead quickly to the second. He writes, as his long poems make unhappily clear, in response to an elemental challenge. Can I really keep it up? For how long? And above all, *will anyone notice?* Mr Ammons seems to have not a trace of the critical facility: his method teaches him no way of separating the poetry from the waste, and he prints everything. So, in *Diversifications*, he speaks of his attachment to the given world in a strangely inappropriate lingo.

> The world is wound round
> with theorems, a winding:
> syntax in thickets meshing:
> coalescences of ongoing
> darkening with thread of
> thought, unraveling: tangles
> of hypothesis weaving
> semantic currents: spools
> of possibility feeding
> spun cotton balls: caps
> of *a priori* with zones of
> steamy incipience.

All the steam generated here is coming from Mr Ammons's private *ignis fatuus*, and it brings to mind Thoreau's comment on a transcendentalist bard: "sublimo-slipshod".

Possibly Mr Ammons would become a better poet if he began to be a critic of himself. The more one reads of his work, however, the more one feels that the dry spells are necessary to his methods. He is writing, again and again, versions of a single poem: in an earlier volume he felt—but how differently—that same "incipience" as "some quality in the air/of summit stones lying free and loose/out among the shrub trees: every/ exigency seems prepared for that might roll, bound, or give flight/ to stones: that is, the stones are/ prepared: they are round and ready". There as elsewhere Mr Ammons had before him the cadences of a remarkable poem by William Carlos Williams, the first stanza of the sequence *Spring and All*, which surveys the fitful growths of shrubbery at the end of winter and "the stark dignity of entrance —Still, the profound change/has come upon them: rooted, they/ grip down and begin to awaken".

Yet the similarities between Williams and Mr Ammons are largely on the surface: Mr Ammons is a more excited and exciting poet who has none of Williams's technical cunning—as a rule his free verse is free and not verse. What persists in his work, and makes one return to it, is a tense and roving vocabulary that follows the demands of an extraordinary temperament. Aloof and yet jocular, lucid or gnarled as the mood fits him, Mr Ammons contrives to be alert in several new ways at once. He can sink to unheard-of depths, but the temptation to close the book on him, which most of those who try him will feel at times, ought to be resisted.

Howard Moss's early poems were something of a curiosity. One could see in them—suspended together, as it were, in solution—the dominant forces in English and American poetry. These were Auden and Stevens, who also became, for better or worse, the leading influences on the next generation. And they might seem opposite enough never to have an impact on the same poet: yet Mr Moss had absorbed them both. One picked up "A Lesson from Van Gogh", read six stanzas about art-and-life, and marked this: "The simple serpent, lion, pig, and jay,/Are not more separate in each other's sight/ Than we who speak—our speech engraves the night/ With all the hieroglyphics of delight". It was not only Auden but Auden's theme: guilty leisure. (About the time Mr Moss wrote this, Auden was writing it too: see "Their Lonely Betters".) But the poet closed his eyes, opened another poem—"From the thin slats of the Venetian blinds/The sun has plucked a sudden metaphor"—and found himself in the middle of *Parts of a World*. With this in the background one can trace Mr Moss's progress. His ear for the line was always superb; the habit of infinitely teasing or teasing-out a particular effect has gone from his work entirely; and his new collection is his best.

It begins with a long poem entitled "Chekhov". *The persistence of memory* might serve as a motto for all of this author's most individual poems—"Elegy for My Father", "Water Island", "Movies for the Home", "Still Pond, No More Moving"—where an attempt to join the past with any consolation is checked by the random shifts of desire in the present. The new poem has a tenderness that in the past Mr Moss showed only fugitively.

> Tonight we may discuss—after the
> Chopin
> Nocturnes, after the I-don't-know-
> how-many
> Performances of Beethoven's
> "Moonlight" Sonata—
> The gradual reduction of Roman
> columns,
> The disease of too many lakes and
> clouds.
> Do cobblestones have a future? Is
> rain
> Removeable? Depressing mornings
> find
> Characters in bed who have no
> reason
> To get up, the light a yellowish half-
> light
> Mirroring the mind, its sad affec-
> tions.

Oddly and movingly, Mr Moss speaks at once for the audience at a play and for the characters in it. Both long for those moments when "the temporary brilliancies gather once more/In the middle distance, and the model lark/Persuades the summer evening to reveal/One private little splendor not for sale". Mr Moss writes very much in the spirit of his master: his poem draws a circle around itself thoughtfully, like the slow movement of a symphony, and its conclusion is beyond the reach of ordinary praise.

> The governess is wearing her old
> forage cap.
> That's Eplhodov playing his guitar.
> Astrov is talking about trees. We
> could be
> Racing the wolves at thirty below
> In a ravine whiplashed by snow, or
> slowly
> Succumbing to boredom in a seaside
> town,
> Waiting for a future that will never
> be.
> The heat getting worse, for off the
> waves
> Pounding faintly late in the moon-
> light,
> At a low moment in our lives.

But this is a poem one would prefer to quote in full.

Buried City contains a number of smaller pieces: high-varnished landscapes of the city; languid, fantastically spun-out reflections on art and nature and the nature of art (Mr Moss's punning is contagious); poems about tropical fish; a trip to the masseur's, described at length. These are New York and, to some extent, *New Yorker* specialities, and they were needed to make a book. The title poem, however, which Mr Moss saves for the end, is in a class with "Chekhov". It alludes to Valéry's "Le Cimetière marin", and like that poem it spells out the mind's absolute dependence on random things. From his own dwelling Mr Moss looks out on the vestiges printed by history—a painting in a cave, a city buried underground—and draws from them his temporary sustenance. But they do not give hope: "How early it grows dark!/They say the snow will bury us this year." And Mr Moss, himself a sceptic, is careful to address a sceptical reader: "If you have come expecting miracles . . ./But you I need not warn." It should be added that the whole monologue is performed with a verbal deftness which poses on the brink of absurdity and then miraculously holds back. "*Caveat emptor*. Caves are everywhere", says Mr Moss at a characteristic moment. "From here on in we synchronize our watches,/For looking at paintings is a form of waiting/. And time's the one disease everybody catches." It is heartening to see the discursive lyric managed once again with a Stevensian confidence and clarity: "Buried City" and "Chekhov" are among the finest poems of recent years.

First person singular

By John Sturrock

MICHEL LEIRIS:
Frêle bruit
199pp. Paris: Gallimard. 52fr.

PHILIPPE LEJEUNE:
Lire Leiris
192pp. Paris: Klincksieck. 54fr.
Le pacte autobiographique
357pp. Paris: Seuil. 55fr.

Frêle bruit closes, and this time surely for good, *La Règle du jeu*, the wonderfully intimate and intelligent cycle of autobiography which Michel Leiris began almost thirty years ago, with *Biffures*, and from which he seemed to have resigned for a first time ten years ago, when the third volume, *Fibrilles*, appeared. On a word-count other autobiographers may be found to have written more than Leiris, but none can have remained autobiographers for so long. *Biffures*, even, was not the start of it, because before that he had published *L'Age d'homme*, a brilliant, unorthodox preamble to the larger work which he began writing in 1930, when he was only twenty-nine years old, but far gone already in retrospection. No autobiographer, for a fact, has ever thought so hard or so subtly about what he was doing while he was actually doing it: *La Règle du jeu* is a definitive essay on as well as in autobiography.

Leiris writes about himself and he writes about himself writing about himself; he wants to make something more complex and personal of his life than the usual etiquette of autobiography would allow, so he flouts etiquette. He is, if there can be such a thing, an autobiographer's autobiographer. *La Règle du jeu* introduces new conventions into autobiography which should, by rights, give that genre a new maturity. Certainly, our expectations of how autobiographers can best in future go about writing themselves up have been permanently raised.

La Règle du jeu has four volumes: *Biffures, Fourbis, Fibrilles*, and now *Frêle bruit*. The titles look alike, all *fs* and *bs*, but what is more to the point they sound alike. Their assonance is a strange advertisement of the kind of whole they are intended to make. Leiris, a lifelong *surréaliste*, if only a short-lived Surrealist, would rather be led by words than lead them. His sense given irrationality is to assume that language has secrets that the reason knows nothing of, and that we shall only learn them if we listen to language with deference, instead of forever giving it our own all too prosaic orders. Language comes before life, for Leiris, and, within language, sound before sense. There is no game he loves more, or plays more creatively, than the ancient one of deriving the meanings of words from their sound. So the four distinct but associated sounds of his title are as much a source of his autobiography as its subject.

There is a dying fall to them. The first three are ornate, even exotic, and plural; the last, *Frêle bruit*, is ominously plain, and singular. After three bangs, a whimper. Leiris once planned for his autobiography to end differently from this, and more positively, with a fourth volume called *Fibules*, which would fasten the whole thing mythically together—a *fibule* being a kind of antique clasp, and Leiris a man for whom continuity has always appeared an extraordinarily heroic virtue. That plan proved too optimistic, and he gave it up. *Frêle bruit* is a prayer, more atonal conclusion, barely conclusive at all indeed, except as a book whose casually atonalistic tone looks forward explicitly to its author's coming dissolution. This "frêle bruit" is the last sound we shall hear from Leiris, it may be, before the vertiginous silence that contemporaries he necrologizes here fall into the silence of death, that terminal episode which has preoccupied and appalled him right from the start.

For this whole fascinated inquiry into his past is coloured emotionally, and even determined formally, by the dread of his eventual annihilation. This is the debilitating foreknowledge which Leiris blames for having turned his life into a game, into something less than wholly serious because it leads so unavoidably to the grave. His transience has robbed him of all self-assurance. That early, rather muscular post-Christian, Matthew Arnold, advised the disappointed immortality-seekers of his day, if they thought they had no other life, to "pitch this one high", but cheery second-beats of this sort would cut no ice with such incorrigible unbelievers as Leiris. He has no religion and no earthly substitute for one. He has pitched this life all too low, living, by his own account, fearfully and incompletely because he has never been able to stop thinking about death.

All the way through *La Règle du jeu* there runs, correspondingly, a tension between what he would most dearly liked to have done and what, humiliatingly, he has done. He has had brave thoughts, and done cautious things. This hurts him most perhaps when it comes to politics. Armchair radicals are perfectly happy as a rule to lounge aggressively in their armchairs, and be safe; Leiris is not happy at having done that, but deeply embarrassed, and will take no credit for being a fan rather than a nuker of revolutions.

He is alarmingly hard on himself, as if there could be few defaulters more contemptible than that one who commits his mind to an egalitarian cause without at the same time risking his body. But Leiris's body means too much to him, and he has never brought himself to risk it for a political or any other cause (unless one counts self-destruction as a cause, for he has had one, incompetent, shot at committing suicide). Those who do risk their bodies—such classes of men as steeple-chase jockeys, bull-fighters, or practising revolutionaries—have been his particular heroes all his life.

Leiris idealizes revolution also for its togetherness. As a morbidly self-centred man, nostalgic for some lost sense of community, and for forms of society which inspire people to transcend themselves instead of cowering within their everyday limits, he seems to see remarkably little difference, unless it be in scale, between the possible solution of his own problem and the solution to the problems of entire societies. Bourgeois societies are unhappy, and built on contradiction, and so is he. Once it was People's China which made him hope things might one day improve, now, in *Frêle bruit*, it is Cuba, and a benign revolution which he presents as all sunshine and song, as if the old Surrealist fantasy of a merger between poetry and the millennium had at last come true. Leiris's will to believe in Mao, or in Castro, is immense, but even in old age, and after the best part of a lifetime of failing to live up to these selfless ideals, he is determined not to go back on them.

Against this, and quite deliberately, and in defiance of his doubts, there is a greater domesticity about this last volume of his autobiography, as the sedentary man owns up one final time. Leiris has never had much to say before about his actual home life, and nothing at all about his work as secretary of the Musée de l'Homme, from where he has now retired. There are still large reticences in *Frêle bruit*, on the principle that there is no call, even now, for others—least of all his wife, whom Leiris seldom invokes and then, very decorously, as "mn compagne"—to be implicated in this account of his own inadequacies. But his daily circumstances become more apparent: his flat overlooking the river on the Quai des Grands-Augustins, his visits to expensive, Anglophile tailors to be measured for his suits, and—that ultimate bourgeois *horizon*—the second home in the country, where he works and exercises the dog. All this is a new, occasionally quite skittish perspective on the troubled autobiographer, recaptured at the last by the comforts he was born into.

But the great thing about Leiris as an autobiographer is that his comforts, *above all* his comforts, must be guilty ones. His *résidence secondaire* may be a blessing but it is also an alibi: Leiris likes having two homes because he likes having an elsewhere as a refuge from a here. He can alternate between them but only because there is a hiatus between them, and it is in such hiatuses that Leiris specializes. It is as if all divides, he they as apparently banal as that between a flat on the Left Bank and a house in the country, lead tortuously back in the end to the crippling divide within him, to repair which was for long the declared purpose of *La Règle du jeu*.

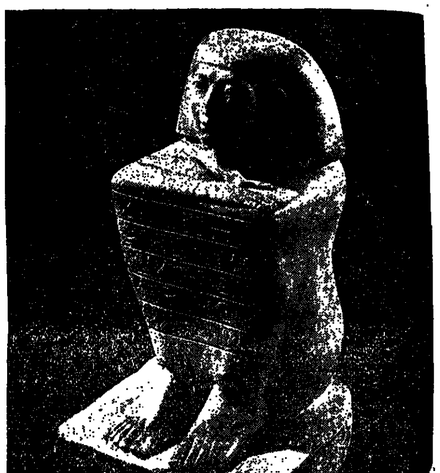
Leiris's first inspiration, as an autobiographer, was a peculiar one. He hoped that the writing of an autobiography might actually cure him of his shameful passivity, that if he confessed himself like a man in public he might afterwards find that he had turned into a more forceful, more commendable human being. Writing was thus to be a preparation for something better: for doing. Life was a game whose rules had so far escaped him: what he lacked, in his own word, was *savoir-vivre*. Writing was another game whose rules he knew, even if they called for serious revisions.

First, therefore, he would draw up his *art poétique* and then find, magically, that successful living followed from successful writing. Leiris started on *La Règle du jeu* not because he had made something valuable of his time, but because he had made nothing of it; where other autobiographers write because they are full of themselves, he wrote because, as it were, he was empty of himself. To act symbolically, in words, was to conjure the inhibitions which had stopped him acting in fact.

It was to, but, needless to say, it didn't: as psychotherapy *La Règle du jeu* has been a fiasco. Leiris is no better at living now than he was forty years ago, and his autobiography, which should have been a means, turned into an end. What he became, and what he has remained, is someone for whom writing is doing, a professional autobiographer. *La Règle du jeu* has not saved him but it has occupied him, and working on it has been his opiate. Where Leiris was naive, originally, was in misinterpreting the courage which it takes to bare one's inmost (as he hoped) self before others, and to direct their attention to whatever seems most despicable about it.

He thought cowardice could become courage if it was made into a spectacle. It was in those heady days that he wrote his famous, influential essay, which was such balm to many a shrinking intellectual soul, "De la littérature considérée comme une tauromachie", in which he somehow builds up the nervous author, dicing with nothing sharper or more deadly than the derision of his readers, to be the equal of the matador, beset by the horns of a real live bull. And where Leiris had looked for self-abasement, he found only vanity; he found he was performing. One of his most lasting addictions, to which he comes back again and again in the four volumes of *La Règle du jeu*, is the theatre, and especially the theatre at its most theatrical, the opera. Like everyone who suffers from what he elsewhere calls a "manque de vraisemblance", he is overcome by institutions which make a profession of pretence. But an autobiography, too, is a spectacle, mounted for show, and as he has continued to write his own, Leiris has become more and more conscious of the gap no autobiography can ever close between what he calls, elegantly, as "le moi qui fit" and what "le moi que l'écris". He is only partially in print as the subject of *La Règle du jeu*.

Because of the unique expectations which he had of his autobiography, Leiris cast it in a form all his own, a form with which he had already experimented in: *L'Age d'homme*. A conventional narrative, he thought would do nothing for him, except, in its disagreeable, fillform way, remind him of his mortality. If, moreover, his life had no story, how in all honesty could he tell it as one? *La Règle du jeu* was conceived altogether differently from the usual pseudo-biography, in which the autobiographer strings his past confidently and chronologically out behind him, on his way to a final coincidence with the present and the self he now is, right at the end of the book. Leiris likes instead a model which was both freer and more demanding: that of a psychoanalysis, the cure through



A powerful Egyptian image of man from c 1450 BC: a limestone sculpture representing the first stage of inner transcendence. Ajit Mookerjee edits Yoga Art *(208pp. Thames and Hudson. £12), the first published collection of images for use specifically with a yogic purpose. Comparable figures and diagrams from other cultures are included, and Philip Rawson contributes an essay on "Western Visions of Unity" in which he draws on Christian mysticism and on the work of modern artists such as Kandinsky and Klee.*

words. There is no chronology to *La Règle du jeu*; the logic of the four volumes is more private and infinitely more revealing. Leiris tells things not in the order in which they originally happened but in the order in which they have come back to him as he writes. He works, to some extent from notes made at the time, so that this is not all improvisation, but there is no knowing in advance how he will write his way from note to note.

His technique shows, because he wants it to show: he fixes his attention on the unremarkable which can at once the most potent and the most enigmatic. If particular words haunt him, he writes to elucidate their meaning for him; if particular experiences trouble him more than they reasonably should, he pursues their associations as far and as candidly as he is able. *La Règle du jeu* is thus a wholly engrossing montage of remembrance and speculation as Leiris articulates his past to satisfy himself and works it obsessively into his present. The past, here, is valuable not for what it was once, but for what it is now.

Leiris also has a part to play in Lejeune's other book, *Le Pacte autobiographique*. The title is promisingly general one, the book is published in a series called "Poétique", but this is not, frustratingly enough, the theoretical study of autobiography one would have expected and which it would be useful to have. Instead, Lejeune has brought together five substantial essays on four autobiographers: Rousseau, who gets two, Gide, Sartre and Leiris—a splendid, wayward, international quintet, though, problematically, Lejeune has picked his cases well and cleared them superbly. But he raises few general questions about autobiography in doing so, and the few he does raise he does not carry very far. For theory, we have to make do with an introductory chapter, on "Le Pacte autobiographique" itself, and a closing one, on "Autobiographie et histoire littéraire". In the first Lejeune isolates, carefully and lucidly, what is structurally specific to autobiography, as distinct from fiction or biography, to wit, the identity between author, character and author's name on the jacket; in the second, he contests the thesis if indeed anyone still holds it, that there is some timeless essence of autobiography, arguing for his own part that the genre can only be defined synchronically, by comparing it with other contemporary literary genres. Both these chapters are sensible and satisfying; but they deserved a filling less circumstantial and less myopic than the very polished *explications de textes* to which Lejeune has chosen to separate them.

The ploughman's lot

By R. L. de Lavigne

R. H. HILTON:
The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages
256pp. Oxford University Press. £6.50.

The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages consists principally of the Ford Lectures for 1973. The six studies cover the following: "The Peasantry as a Class"; "The Social Structure of the Village"; "The Peasants' Economy"; "Conflict and Collaboration"; "The Small Town as Part of Peasant Society"; "Women in the Village". Since these are not of great length, having been printed virtually as delivered in order not to delay publication, the opportunity has been taken to add to them five related studies. These latter being reprints, the present discussion is concerned primarily with the Ford Lectures, the materials for which have been drawn mainly from the West Midlands.

The methodological debate conducted in the first lecture sets the tone for what is to follow. This considers whether the peasantry constituted a class. For R. H. Hilton, a positive answer is alone possible. He rejects two alternative approaches. He dismisses summarily that of Mousnier and his disciples which is to study medieval society according to the contemporary concept of orders, or estates. The notion was too vague to be of real use; as society became more complex so new estates had to be invented. Moreover, to study society in this way is to admit that we do not know more about social stratification and mechanisms than contemporaries. Above all it is not useful because the peasantry were not an estate—though Professor Hilton does later interpret some contemporaries as saying that the peasantry were the third estate.

Anthropologists, on the other hand, do have a clear concept of the peasantry but it is one which is also rejected. Their approach is "traditionalist" (he quotes André Varagnac who sees pre-Industrial society in France as descending from Neolithic times) and as such they have no place for a dynamic of social change. Professor Hilton is looking for a definition not of the peasantry but of the later-medieval peasantry. This he offers in five points. Since it is central to the book, it is worth quoting:

(i) They [the peasantry] possess, even if they do not own, the means of agricultural production by which they subsist. (ii) They work their holdings essentially as a family unit, primarily with family labour. (iii) They are normally associated in larger units than the family, that is villages or hamlets, with greater or lesser elements of common property and collective rights according to the character of the economy. (iv) Ancillary workers, such as agricultural labourers, artisans, building workers are derived from their own ranks and are therefore part of the peasantry. (v) They support super-imposed classes and institutions such as landlords, church, state, towns by producing more than is necessary for their own subsistence and economic reproduction.

Professor Hilton assumes that the above gives a definition of the peasantry as a class. But does it? The majority of Western sociologists would argue that there can be no class without class-consciousness. Hilton, while arguing that the later-medieval peasantry had a certain "awareness", argues that they were not class-conscious. Indeed one wonders how they could have been in a society which possessed neither the word nor the concept.

Class-consciousness is, however, less central to Marxist class theory. Essentially Hilton argues that the most important divisions in society, whatever name one gives to them, are economic ones. Since the peasantry, whether free or unfree in status, were the tenants and/or the employees of the seigneurial "class", this was the overriding division of rural society before which all others pale into insignificance.

Doubtlessly few Western economic historians would object to Hilton's definition of the peasantry. By economic definition, they constitute a social category worthy of study. But few would care to go beyond the word *category* to that of *class*. Indeed social historians of both the estate and the anthropological schools will find much to object to here. The former will argue that, whatever the drawbacks of using late-medieval concepts of society, they are less than those involved in using concepts either alien to that society or on which that society placed less emphasis than we may. The attempt to impose our concepts on the past can only end in a nonsense. Assuming that the general concept of class grew out of that of estates, the fact that contemporaries did not see the peasantry as either an estate or even as one rank within the third estate, can be lost sight of by the social historian only at his peril.

As for the anthropologists, they will argue that it is only the weaker among themselves who see pre-industrial peasant society as static. Had Professor Hilton gone to Arnold Van Gennep, surely the doyen of French folklorists, he would have found that dynamic of social change which, he claims, is missing. Although Van Gennep's dynamic is one of the "genius" of the individual it is not that Comtean genius which Marxists find so objectionable, but rather one which in the end is not incompatible with the Marxist concept of praxis. Admittedly based on exceptionally informative source material drawn from the archives of the Inquisition of Pamiers, E. Le Roy Ladurie's brilliant study of *Montaillou, village occitan de 1294 à 1324*, recently published, shows how much can be achieved by using an anthropological approach.

Professor Hilton's vision of rural society is more limited and the effects are felt throughout his lectures. Thus, having set aside anthropological groupings, he sees no significant internal division in village society. The economic division between the ranks of ploughmen (husbandmen) and labourers was not important because socially they were cohesive. No doubt; but he does not, at the top of village society, consider those ranks, intermediate between peasant and lord, whether lay or ecclesiastical, who may equally have blurred the divide between these two major groups. When he considers conflict in rural society, this rigid division does tend to be broken down, but not as much as it could be. It could hardly be otherwise since feudal rent remains for him the primary cause of social tension. Thus it can scarcely be said that Professor Hilton offers an analysis of tension and conflict in rural society as complex and subtle as that of Guy Fourquin in his *Les soulèvements populaires au moyen âge*.

With such an economically based conception of society, Professor Hilton is at his most interesting when dealing with the peasant economy and with the small town as part of peasant society. In the former he considers whether the peasant economy was market-oriented. He shows a significant amount of monetary transactions both outside and inside the village. This affected the nature and size of peasant holdings. The argument that their size was determined by the size of the peasant family is thus rejected. It is, however, doubtful whether any self-respecting historian now does hold this latter view. It is the degree of market orientation which is at issue and Hilton shows the limitations of that orientation, not only in this lecture but in his consideration of small towns. At a time when many Mediterranean historians are deciding that the difference between village and small town was quantitative rather than qualitative, Professor Hilton argues forcefully in the opposite direction for the West Midlands and, by implication, for England as a whole. The quantitative argument cannot hold good, because many small towns had lower populations than some surrounding villages. The towns were distinguished by the occupations of their inhabitants who were overwhelmingly artisans and traders. The evidence provided is not conclusive. No one accustomed to the multi-occupational nature of late-medieval society would place too much reliance on the evidence of occupations as listed in the poll-tax returns of 1381. The evidence from seigneurial court rolls is not as satisfactory as that from notarial registers in the Mediterranean region.

Nevertheless, from these sources, an impressive body of information is built up to support his argument. Urban landed possessions concerned horticulture, not agriculture. The rhythms of life were not agricultural. For want of better evidence, it is however difficult to ignore the enormous weight of agricultural and viticultural interest expressed in the urban taxation records, especially the *estimi* and *catasti*, of southern France and Italy. Doubtless the debate will continue.

The last lecture looks at the status of peasant women. A hoary Marxist methodological problem is revealed. Can one consider women as a separate class? In the end Professor Hilton thinks not. The status of women improved between 1350 and 1450 mainly because the economic lot of the peasantry as a whole improved. Those whose approach to the question of women's rights is more anthropological may find considerable difficulty in accepting this sanguine hypothesis.

The ivory "hand of justice", a baton used at the consecration service of the French monarch: Napoleon had the hand reset in 1804. It appears as the frontispiece to Fleur de Lys: The Kings and Queens of France by Joy Law *(256pp. Hamish Hamilton. £6.95), which combines portraits and lively contemporary accounts of monarchs from the crowning of Hugh Capet (987-996) to the execution of Louis XVI, and the abdication in 1830 of Charles X.*

The emperor's ideals

By H. G. Koenigsberger

MANUEL FERNANDEZ ALVAREZ:
Charles V
Elected Emperor and Hereditary Ruler
220pp. Thames and Hudson. £6.50.

In 1519 Charles of Habsburg, heir of the houses of Austria, Burgundy, Aragon and Castile, was elected Holy Roman Emperor. The house of Aragon already ruled over nearly half of Italy, and Charles was to add Milan to its possessions. Within a few years his brother Ferdinand acquired, by inheritance and election, the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia. At the same time Hernán Cortés was conquering Mexico and was beginning to talk of his sovereign as "ruler of the world". Perhaps Cortés was rather glib and had more than half an eye on his own advantage; but he, more than most, had some justification for launching such an idea.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the history of Emperor Charles V has fascinated and intrigued historians, as it fascinated, intrigued and also frightened his contemporaries. For his subjects and supporters the main problem was: what did it mean that one man should have so much power? His opponents, i.e. the French and others who felt themselves threatened, asked the same question, but in a less philosophical, more practical form: what is he going to do with all this power? To the modern historian the problem presents itself on two levels, the personal level of ideas, aims and of decision-making, and the impersonal level of resources, of finances and of social and institutional structures.

Manuel Fernández Alvarez has concentrated mainly on the first level; and since his *Charles V* is part of a new series, Men in Office (general editor: Ragnhild Hatton), such a focus seems justified or, at least, justifiable. There is therefore nothing here of the Braudel school, no historical geography, little of *structures* and no *conjunctures* at all. There are no statistical tables and, in consequence, no attempt to correlate economic and political movements, such as for instance the fluctuations of Spanish-American trade and imperial war efforts, in the way in which Pierre Chaunu has attempted to do this for the reign of Philip II. It is arguable that Chaunu's theories have not stood up well to detailed criticism, and that Professor Fernández prefers to follow the sources without attempting to build models. But what is the intellectual or economic developments of the period simply be ignored?

Broadly speaking, this was an age of increasing population, rising prices, growing towns and expanding trade. These were in fact essential conditions for the functioning of such unprecedentedly large political units as the Habsburg Empire and even the kingdom of France. We can see this clearly in the steadily rising taxes which governments were able to impose on their subjects and in the ever larger loans they were able to raise on the money markets of Antwerp and Lyons.

Without these, the increasingly expensive campaigns in Italy, the Netherlands and Germany could never have been fought. The author speaks of finance, of course; but he does not convey the almost obsessive preoccupation with money which shows as the reader from the correspondence of the emperor and his ministers and generals. And thus Fernández misunderstands certain actions. The Fuggers, he says, backed Charles in the imperial election, rather than Francis I, because of their German nationalism. Well, perhaps, although Charles was not very obviously a German; but the Fuggers had also invested large sums in silver, and copper mines in Habsburg territories. These investments and their vast international marketing organization would certainly not have survived Habsburg hostility.

Professor Fernández is better on the politics of the politicians. Many volumes of political and diplomatic correspondence of the period have been published. He knows them all and also a great deal of the even larger masses of unpublished manuscripts scattered in the major European archives. He uses such sources most effectively to make his points. Thus a letter of 1546 from the emperor to his son Philip leaves no doubt about his reasons for attacking the Schmalkaldic League, the alliance of the Protestant princes of Germany:

> You already know from my previous letters the main reasons for declaring war against the Protestants and how it could not be avoided. . . . All I would like to say at this stage is that though my goal and intention is, as you know, to make war for the sake of religion, it is considered politic to allege that the war is for the purpose of punishing rebellious subjects.

Fernández sees Charles V's career in four stages. In the first Charles made his peace in and with Spain and began to identify himself with that country which was to become his main source of imperial power. In the second he secured Italy and fought off the Turks in the Mediterranean and in central Europe. In the third he defeated the Lutherans and tried to bring them back into a reformed Catholic Church, and in the fourth he attempted to consolidate his work for his heirs. Throughout he had to cope with the fierce enmity of France. This is a sensible schema and it gives shape to a geographically and topically diverse career that is notoriously difficult to present coherently. All the same, I wonder whether it is not too coherent, too tidy. For this is exactly what Charles V's reign was not and there were, I believe, good reasons for this.

The letter quoted above is a clue. Charles V was an idealist. His motivation was religious. God's will—later ages would have called it divine providence—had endowed him with all his dominions so that he could fulfil God's purpose, the defence of Christendom against its external and internal enemies, the Turks and the heretics. But God had made him a ruler, not a prophet; and therefore he must also act as a politician and a general. These roles were not easy to combine. Constantly Charles found political imperatives overriding religious considerations. A more insidious, he found himself interpreting religious problems in political terms and, like many men convinced of the moral superiority of their aims, he was not always scrupulous about his methods.

Quite early in his reign he agreed to a plan for a partition of France with Henry VIII. The French, not unnaturally, never fully trusted him again. He negotiated with the German Protestants not only for help against the Turks but also for a theological compromise with the Catholic Church; and, again very naturally, the popes never quite forgave him. He allied himself with the Lutheran Duke Maurice of Saxony against the Schmalkaldians; and he became himself a victim of this professional doublecrosser. At the very end of his life he regretted having kept his word to Luther at the Diet of Worms and not burnt him as a heretic; but posterity has judged that his chivalrous instincts of 1521 were both honourable and politically justified. At other times, moreover, Charles was prepared to go to surprising lengths for the sake of his ideals. Twice he contemplated quite seriously giving up either the duchy of Milan or the whole Netherlands to a younger son of the king of France if this would bring permanent peace and French cooperation against the Turks and the Lutherans. In the end he resigned from his whole empire; not because his reign had been a failure—he had just brought off one of his greatest coups, the marriage of Philip to Mary of England, a marriage with apparently the most dazzling dynastic prospects—but to retire to a religious life, not in a monastery, as some nineteenth-century romantics thought, but in a comfortable villa, adjoining a monastery and with a still considerable court.

It was a fascinating career. If Professor Fernández has not plumbed all its depths nor appreciated all its subtleties and contradictions, he has given a workmanlike and scholarly account of it. The translation, by J. A. Lalaguna, is excellent on the whole, as is the production of this book with its forty well chosen and generally fine-known illustrations.

A calculus of pain

By David Martin

PETER L. BERGER:
Pyramids of Sacrifice
Political Ethics and Social Change
272pp. Allen Lane. £5.50.

In his preface to *Pyramids of Sacrifice* Peter Berger says that his interest in Third World problems began when he served as a consultant to the steering committee of "Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam". From this initial interest there followed a concern with Latin America which at that time seemed a plausible site for future Vietnams. One of the results was a recognition of the connection between issues related to development and the scholarly matters which had previously dominated Berger's writings, notably the sociology of knowledge and the maintenance of universes of meaning. *The Homeless Mind—Modernization and Consciousness* was a first fruit of this cross-fertilization of topics. It was an impressive and important book, oddly neglected, especially in view of the intense interest evoked by previous essays on consciousness and religion.

Perhaps it is now easier to assess the scholarly virtues of Professor Berger than it was during the time he was a cult figure among student radicals. Hardly any of those cult figures survived as such and he himself consciously undercut his cultic role by the complexity of his viewpoint. His followers were convinced that when he talked about the social construction of reality he was covertly encouraging them to reconstruct reality. They also assumed that anyone who championed humanistic and phenomenological positions in sociology was part and parcel to the fashionable and vaguely radical clamour against science. They were wrong and eventually discovered they were wrong.

Professor Berger continues to engage attention for excellent reasons. His writing is sharp and quickly etches its point in the reader's mind. The viewpoint is integrated and open-ended at the same time. It generates an excitement at rediscovering what you already know in a context which alters and illuminates it. There is commitment in Berger's writing but no closure. Some things clearly must be done, such as the removal of gross dependency as between developed and underdeveloped societies of whatever political persuasion, but there are no overall economic and political solutions to be recommended in every case.

Professor Berger's aim is to formulate a political "ought" in relation to a political "could be" and "will be". The ethics of change involve a balance of alternative costs and above all a "calculus of pain". To that extent his attitude resembles that of Barrington Moore: we do at least know that men do *not* want pain and hunger. At the same time some costs are unjustifiable and it is very much to be regretted that both left and right (his primary instances are China and Brazil) justify their policies in terms of long-term benefit. The left justifies the political holocaust and the right justifies economic exploitation on the same suspect ground: cruelty *now* for kindness then. The great leap forward has to resemble climbing a pyramid in the colour of which the gods of modernity exact sacrifice. If you sacrifice enough now to modernization or to socialism the gods of history or progress will bestow every blessing. The priests of modernization or socialism propose the sacrifice: the masses are both exalted object of the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself. The intellectuals invoke them and employ (or underemploy) them. If way to the better there be, it exacts a sacrifice. The cost is not merely blood and bodies but a fractured universe of meaning.

Professor Berger's concern for the fracture of meaning is not the concern of a straightforward traditionalist. He is rather a man who nurtures a preliminary respect for all the varied orders of meaning that men have projected on to an alien universe. And he also respects the desperate aspiration to achieve a better standard of life and the options that modernity offers in place of traditional necessities and givens. "Ancient securities have to be posed against painful options and the pain of discovering the existence of options. Cosmic homelessness has to be posed against the desire for a dwelling-place here and now. Paradoxically the shift from necessity to a margin of freedom is accompanied by potent myths, including myths with a strong component of ineluctability. Myth decrees the need to force men to be free: the elect must raise the consciousness of the average man. The elect must act now in order that no elect exist in the social world to come. The only difficulty in the way is a serpentine "x", variously defined, which must be eliminated.

So the way out of the world of dreams and drugs has to be by means of myths and dreams. It is here that socialism has its unique advantage. It is not clear that socialism always has the best arguments. Nor is it clear that such achievements as it can claim are not in spite of rather than because of socialism. But it undoubtedly has the best myths, uniting the urge to modernity to the nostalgia for community and a secure universe of meaning. Since myth is so potent, doubt is thrown over on man's faith in the process of rationalization. Maybe the concept of rationalization is itself a myth.

But why not accept the myth as the agent of necessity now and the midwife of a better, freer future? For excellent reasons, which are peculiarly clear to someone like Professor Berger who has worked in the sociology of religion and knows his theology and ecclesiastical history. Myths may indeed, as Georges Sorel claimed, be the necessary agents of necessity, but they are engines of human purpose which gather their own momentum. The impulse to control (which is also the impulse to freedom, since you cannot choose if you do not control) has to rely on means which are intrinsically uncontrollable. The power necessary to go into orbit has to be such that it will overshoot the target and veer off into outer darkness. The urge away from the mundane, limiting determinisms of the past must itself be over-determined. So the potent myth must be simultaneously utilized and criticized: there has to be a reverse engine of criticism incorporated from the start and selectively applied as time goes on. We may be living in a secularized world but we need both demythologization and demystification.

So what Professor Berger presents here is an exercise in the critical intelligence. Somehow he has to keep all the balls in the air at once: necessary costs contrasted with gratuitous costs, future and uncertain benefits with certain and present pains, cosmic homelessness with consumer comforts, the practical distortions of social scientific knowledge (and ignorance) and the commitment to a rare but crucial objectivity.

As becomes a sociologist rooted in a Lutheran background, Professor Berger sets out his prescriptions in twenty-five theses which he nails modestly to the front of his book. The paradox of these theses is that they represent a balance which must be struck and which cannot be struck. Yet precisely because the balance will not be struck, somebody has to strike it, and needs do so in such a way that he leans slightly against the predominant fashions without leaning at an acute and obvious right-angle. Professor Berger's past gives him the opportunity to lean convincingly. Since the predominant fashions against which he leans are in part incorporated in potent myth, he has to promote the idea that all contributions to demystification are to be warmly welcomed. He has to pray for a saving hint of genuine secularity: save us, O Lord, from *too much* necessary delusion.

Let me give an example of a prescription which will not be followed. "Socialist revolutions have imposed severe human costs. An assessment of the achievements of socialism (such as a more egalitarian distribution of the good things of life) must weigh these costs, case by case." Professor Berger knows as well as I do that this will not happen. *Who* is going to carry out this judicious assessment case by case? How many Marxist intellectuals or technocratic visionaries are going to retard their ideological velocity by conceding a certain validity to the resistances? Where alternatives are sharp and conflicting people do not engage in the kind of balanced discourse which allows opponents a crucial advantage.

Nevertheless the impossible theses are true:

Thesis 12. Policies for social change are typically made by cliques of politicians and intellectuals with claims to superior insights. These claims are typically spurious.

Thesis 13. It is in principle impossible to "raise the consciousness" of anyone, because all of us are stumbling around on the same level of consciousness—a pretty dim level.

Thesis 16. Most political decisions must be made on the basis of inadequate knowledge (postulate of ignorance). To understand this is to become very cautious about policy options that exact high human costs.

I like the postulate of ignorance. I like too his treatment of the idea that there is an optimum amount of knowledge which, once exceeded, works against the possibility of utilizing knowledge. And some knowledge is oddly useless. Economics is, *in se*, curiously incapable of providing a rounded, coherent answer to the problems posed in this book, and peculiarly so in its most "rigorous" manifestations, such as econometrics. What Professor Berger here provides is neither specifically knowledge nor spurious rigour, but the humane activity of the ecumenical intelligence. Its theses may perhaps lead to a little reformation, or even to what is most of all to be desired: the reform of reform.

Thinkers and theologians

By J. M. Cameron

BERNARD REARDON:
Liberalism and Tradition
Aspects of Catholic Thought in Nineteenth-Century France
308pp. Cambridge University Press. £8.50.

Bernard Reardon remarks that "the nineteenth century is with the seventeenth the greatest in the literary history of France". He thinks it is a great century for philosophy, too. This is arguable, though it is hard to think that the century of de Maistre, Maine de Biran, Blondel and Bergson, to choose from among the most eminent, really compares well with the century of Descartes, Mersenne, Gassendi and Malebranche. The thought of the seventeenth century still provokes us; that of the nineteenth has run into the sand. In any case, Dr Reardon's chosen theme in *Liberalism and Tradition* is Catholic thought, and this covers much more than philosophy in the technical sense. Chateaubriand had no philosophical talent but he had immense influence (perhaps unfortunately) on the revival of Catholicism after the Restoration. Lamennais had originality but as a theologian rather than a philosopher. The Catholic philosophers were solid undistinguished men moving with caution, and with a disagreeable consciousness of the hungry, menacing gaze of both Church and State, between Aquinas and Descartes; they shivered in Kantian breezes, were troubled by the vertigo of Pascal.

The great men of "thought" are undoubtedly de Maistre, Lamennais, Blondel, and Loisy. But there are many others who deserve some attention and who are interesting as members of groups and movements responding to the questions and pressures of the time. Dr Reardon has gone deeply into the period and knows it thoroughly. Not many, even among the learned would be able, at least on a sudden demand, to identify or expatiate upon Ubaghs, Tits, Lupus, Ewen Bautain, Bordas-Demoulin, Ollé-Laprune, are for us bathed in the late evening light of long, long ago. It would not be true to say that in Dr Reardon's pages they come to life again; but they are given such renewed life as they are able to bear.

Down to our own day the French sustain the thought of Descartes and Pascal (and therefore the Augustinian tradition) as an affliction. They move slowly or swiftly between two poles. Here we have: clarity, distinctness, the ideal of a mathematical system, a language in which (it is supposed) everything can be said clearly, a rancorous dislike of the confusing body with its enveloping enchanting sensations, the drive towards system throughout the field of discourse. Against this we find: the *angoisse* caused by the world's no longer speaking to us, by the silencing of the music of the spheres; the infinite distances between *l'ordre des corps, l'ordre des esprits, l'ordre de la charité*; the desperation of the *il faut parier*; the contempt for the world (*les rois, les riches, les capitaines*); the scepticism about the possibility of justice and decency in political life; the surging vision of the indifferent God of the philosophers. Virtually all the thinkers examined by Dr Reardon move between the two poles.

Another way of bringing out what is characteristic in the French thought of the nineteenth as of the seventeenth century is to note its persistent Augustinianism. *Credo ut intelligam* could be written at the head of most of the books here mentioned. The ghost of Jansenism still walked in Rome and most Catholic writers of any interest were scrutinized by the Holy Office in the spirit of an agitated hen viewing the watery adventures of the ducklings she has hatched. From Lamennais to Loisy the list of those excluded from the Church is long. The French seemed to lack suppleness in their relations with Rome. It is interesting to compare the fortunes of the French with those of the English. Newman, just as Augustinian as any Frenchman, but settled with an irony that comes from his study of Locke and Hume, was unpopular in Rome but survived to become a cardinal under Leo XIII. Neither Acton nor von Hügel was excommunicated. One man (a Frenchman could reflect) is able to steal a horse without censure, another is arrested for looking over the hedge.

One of the most interesting things emphasized by Dr Reardon is the death of Gallicanism. This was not on the whole a result of Roman pressure. From 1815 Gallicanism is dead. No one who romanticized the old regime put Gallicanism at the centre of the picture. On the contrary, as with de Maistre, the monarchical principle in the Church is thought to aid monarchical authority in the State. The French Revolution had given the propertied classes (its chief beneficiaries) a great fright; 1848 and 1870 did nothing to relieve their fears. The position of the Church as a pillar of the supporting the [illegible] is transmitted from de Maistre to Maurras. The enraged democrats, Lamennais above all, are equally ultramontane and anti-Gallican. Ultramontanism is the only guarantee of spiritual independence and implies in the modern world the separation of Church and State, freedom of conscience, religious pluralism.

We are grateful to Dr Reardon for his patient and thorough chronicle of what we might mistakenly suppose to be old battles over dead and dusty issues. On the contrary, the issues are still with us. The irony is that Lamennais and Loisy triumph from their graves. The French *intégristes* are quite right in bawling at the tops of their voices that this is just what has happened. It does not occur to them, so much are they the prisoners of the French experience, that it is at least conceivable that nineteenth-century Rome, with coloured illustrations by Louis Veuillot, was eccentric; that with John XXIII and Paul it has returned to the judicious centre.

Of place and past

By George Woodcock

During the 1960s Canada was seized with a kind of green-sickness, a fever of growing-up whose symptoms, though mainly passing, were still somewhat sensational for so sober and grey a land as it had seemed to the world outside during the century since Confederation. An ironic modesty—expressed in the obsessiveness with which writers searched for "a Canadian identity"—had been the stance that seemed safest in a country developing towards nationhood in the opposing shadows of the empire and the republic; it was an ambiance in which the amiable excesses of a Sir John A. Macdonald or the furtive otherworldly communications of a Mackenzie King might flourish, but it was hardly a world for original poets, and appropriately the most considerable Canadian poet of that era was the literary conservative E. J. Pratt, whose particular force was the writing of rather prolix mock epics (*The Titanic, Towards the Last Spike*, etc) in Hudibrastic verse. Younger and lighter and livelier figures, such as F. R. Scott and A. M. Klein and W. W. E. Ross, A. J. M. Smith and Dorothy Livesay and P. K. Page, had introduced modernist poetry into Canada by the mid-century, but their influences were largely those of the English 1930s modified by Pound and Williams, and the land still awaited its true voices.

The 1960s was the period of that strange festival of Canada's awakening to its own cultural potentialities. Expo 67; it was the period of Canada's transformation from a haven of sturdy pioneer individualism into one of the world's leading welfare states; it was the period of Trudeaumania, a hysteria strange to recall a decade later when the idol of vanished teenyboppers has become the sardonic gerontocrat of Canada's political leaders; it was a period of resurgent nationalism when youthful radicalism found its local forms in a quickly extinguished movement of the far left which accepted the fatal name of Waffle, in the founding of American-born professors in Canadian universities, and on one splendid occasion, which revived memories of Alexander Brock and Tecumseh and the glorious days of 1812, in an invasion of American territory by a mob of Vancouver war-resisters who swept aside the Yankee frontier guards and rampaged with their red and black flags through the town of Blaine south of the border.

The 1960s—and undoubtedly the general excitability of the times had a great deal to do with it—was also the decade when poetry moved from the shadows into a dominant position in a Canadian literary culture which hitherto had presented an assortment of prose faces to the world; the faces of Stephen Leacock's uneasy laughter, of Morley Callaghan's fabulist moralism, of Hugh MacLennan's romantic nationalism, of Goldwin Smith's transplanted Arnoldian humanism, of Donald Creighton's legendary historicism and of Frederick Philip Grove's fumblingly powerful dramas of pioneer life. Even in the 1950s, the Canadian writers who most dazzled their fellow countrymen and who made the greatest names abroad were those audacious prose fantasists, Northrop Frye and Marshall McLuhan, the first of whom found in mythology the elucidation of past literatures and hence the key to criticism, and the second of whom narrowed the human future into his personal myth of the global village.

Brilliant as some of the poets may have been who emerged as characteristic of the Canadian 1950s (and they included James Reaney and Jay Macpherson, Eli Mandel and Douglas le Pan, Margaret Avison and Phyllis Webb) they remained on the shadowy edges of that clearing in the hostile forest which has been the image of human culture for so many Canadians. They existed almost on sufferance, as was perhaps most dramatically (and pathetically) indicated by the curious theory, current at the time, that writers like Reaney and Macpherson and Mandel were really the mythopoeic disciples of Northrop Frye—as if poets could take their inspiration from even the most imaginative of prose-writing critics! It was an assumption comprehensible only in a country whose poets, generation after generation, had remained for all their vitality essentially derivative: Oliver Goldsmith, for example, of his British namesake and forebear; Archibald Lampman of Keats, Bliss Carman of Shelley, A. M. Klein frequently of Browning, the early Dorothy Livesay and P. K. Page of the *New Signatures* poets, and James Reaney all too often of Blake in his sillier moods.

It would be wrong to suggest that in the 1960s Canadian poets ceased to be derivative. In many cases it was just a change of model, from British to North American, and the Black Mountain school of poets has had a numerous following north of the 49th parallel. At the same time a new kind of derivation appeared, which confirmed that a genuinely native school of poets had emerged—Canadian poets borrowed for the first time from other Canadian poets, and almost any little magazine containing its imitators of some of the more vigorous local poets, like Irving Layton or Al Purdy or Margaret Atwood.

What happened in poetry during the 1960s was analogous to the developments in counter-cultural politics: a kind of literary nationalism accompanied by a kind of poetic participatory democracy. The number of poets writing and publishing increased phenomenally. When I started to edit *Canadian Literature* in 1959, a mere twenty-four books of verse appeared in Canada during the year, and most of those were issued by established publishing houses for the sake of prestige, since there was no mass readership for poetry. During the 1950s public interest in poetry had been so slight that when the two journals which published it consistently (Alan Crawley's *Contemporary Verse* and John Sutherland's *Northern Review*) ceased to appear early in the decade there was only one magazine in the whole country (*The Fiddlehead* of Fredericton) devoted to verse, until at the very end of the 1950s the first of a new crop of literary magazines, Robert Weaver's *Tamarack Review*, Jan de Bruyn's *Prism* and Louis Dudek's *Delta*, began to appear. And even then, as Dudek remarked with some justice, "twenty or so poets might be thought to represent all the reputable poetry of the country".

Caricature of George Woodcock as "Odysseus ever returning" by Isaac Bickerstaff, from his "Caricature Gallery of Literary Masters", published in the October, 1975, issue of The Tamarack Review *(quarterly from Box 159, Postal Station K, Toronto M4P 2G5. $Can7.50 per annum).*

Somewhere at the beginning of the 1960s the whole literary climate began to change, and in 1963 George Bowering, one of the young poets who first appeared at this time, remarked with accurate foresight: "If the publishers can keep up with the poets (and some of them are becoming unusually receptive) the next ten years will be, in terms of sheer quantity at least, the most fruitful in the history of Canadian poetry." Events were to prove him right, though the matter of publication was largely taken out of the hands of the publishers by the poets themselves.

By 1970 the number of books published in the year had increased fivefold to 120, and there have been years during the present decade when it has reached 200. This number of books, of course, betokened a proportionately large number of active poets. While I was recently preparing an essay on Canadian poetry between 1960 and 1973 for the new edition of the University of Toronto Press's *Literary History of Canada*, I compiled a working checklist of poets active during the period, and found that no fewer than 590 of them had published books in Canada between the above dates, not counting the hundreds more who had published verse in magazines and in anthologies but had not actually published books. A surprising proportion of the 590—at least a fifth of them—were competent and original poets whom I found it appropriate to discuss in my essay. A far cry from Dudek's "twenty or so poets" representing in 1960 "all the reputable poetry of the country"!

The fact that so much poetry was being written, published and read during the 1960s and 1970s is related, of course, to sweeping changes in ways of publication and to a vast increase in the reading and listening audience for poetry, and these facts have had enough effect on the kind of poetry being written to be worth a brief examination before I go on to talk of some of the poets and to discuss what trends among them appear to be significant.

While in the 1950s most poetry published in Canada came from established Toronto publishers, by the end of the 1960s (even though some houses like McClelland and Stewart and the Oxford University Press had increased their poetry lists) the initiative had passed to small presses publishing *con amore* and without hope of profit. How many of these have operated over the period it is not easy to determine, since most of them developed only rudimentary systems of distribution and self-advertisement, but *A Checklist of Canadian Small Presses* published in 1974 by Dalhousie University in Halifax included a total of 237 English-language presses. Since the *Checklist* omitted several presses of whose existence I knew, and probably failed to include others which I did not know, the likelihood is that the number of presses actually operating during the period was nearer 300, quite apart from the established publishing houses. Not all these enterprises published poetry, and some, to my knowledge, were vanity presses or branches of printing houses engaged in profitable local production. Nevertheless, at least 200 of them were engaged exclusively in poetry publication, without profit being a consideration, and their locations were spread across the 4,000-mile breadth of Canada. About half operated from the large province of Ontario, about a quarter from British Columbia, and there were appreciable groups in the Maritime provinces and the English-speaking sectors of Quebec. Unlike the established publishers, these small presses were not clustered in the large centres; many operated from small towns or villages. Seven Persons Repository, for example, published from the tiny Albertan village of Seven Persons (an almost strictly descriptive name), Sundog Press from the half-Indian settlement of Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan, and Sono Nis Press from the stormy remoteness of the Queen Charlotte Islands off the Pacific Coast.

The presses varied astonishingly in productivity and in craftsmanlike quality. Some published one book and then vanished; on the other hand *Fiddlehead* Books of Fredericton (a centre of poetry since the days of Charles G. D. Roberts and the other "Confederation Poets") has published more than a hundred titles under the guidance of the poet and critic Fred Cogswell. Standards of presentation vary from the deliberately uncouth, like the smudged mimeograph collections of concrete poetry and manic verse brought out by Bill Bissett at his Blewointment Press in Vancouver, to the handsomely designed and carefully printed and bound volumes produced by Talonbooks in the same city (which has brought out more than seventy volumes of verse and plays during the past nine years).

As I have said, almost all these presses are operated by poets, who publish, print and distribute the books which they and kindred poets write. Very often they also publish poetry magazines or are closely linked with them. The magazines have proliferated as greatly as the presses. Wynne Francis, an authority on the underground of Canadian publishing, estimated in an article she wrote for *Canadian Literature* in 1973 that during the previous five years no fewer than sixty magazines devoted wholly or in part to poetry were in existence, not counting the twenty-odd university-sponsored journals which published poetry, a vast difference from the situation less than twenty years before when *The Fiddlehead* stood almost alone. As with the presses, some of these journals have been ephemeral, vanishing after a single issue, but others, like *Tamarack Review* and *Malahat Review*, which Robin Skelton edits from the Pacific coast city of Victoria, have become durable magazines of international standing.

Presses and magazines alike belong to an extraordinary nomadic society of poets and their sympathizers which has developed entirely during the past fifteen years, and which is kept alive by the marathon reading tours that take Canadian poets from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and from Ontario to the Yukon. To arrange such tours has become one of the main functions of the recently

founded League of Canadian Poets, a kind of verse-writers' trade union, whose reading programmes are largely financed by the Canada Council, angel of so many of the country's recent artistic undertakings. Such reading tours have their disadvantages, since they encourage self-dramatization, so that poets like Irving Layton and Al Purdy tend to cultivate clownish platform persona (cockerels and drinkers) that have little relation to the real qualities of their poetry, and one good poet at least, Leonard Cohen, has been almost entirely tempted away into the ambiguous world of pop music. At the same time the readings, which take place mainly on university and college campuses and in the haunts of the counter-culture where poetry shares the same kind of prestige as music and such crafts as pottery and weaving, provide both an appreciative audience for the poetry and a market for the books and magazines probably more effective than the sadly inadequate network of bookshops in Canada.

As for the poets themselves, Dorothy Livesay, a veteran of the 1930s movement in Canada who is now enjoying a renewed career as a poet of changing insights (only recently she published her *Collected Poems*, significantly subtitled "The Two Seasons"), remarked to me a few days ago that never before in Canada had the poets been so personally and so productively in touch. Perhaps for the first time since Canada became a nation in 1867 a genuine nationwide sense of community exists among the hundreds of practising Canadian verse-writers, yet this has done nothing to lessen the strong regionalist feelings that Canadian geography, its vast distances and differences, induces among contemporary Canadian poets as much as it does among other artists. Often one feels that if a true federalism survives anywhere in Canada, it does so among the artists with their intense local loyalties and their countrywide links.

One of the most striking features of the recent poetry renaissance in Canada has been its non-generational character, which is linked to an essentially non-doctrinaire approach in formal terms. (The only really doctrinaire poets are a group of disciples of Charles Olson who originally published a magazine called *Fish* in the early 1960s and now cluster around *Open Letter*, whose editor Frank Davey is their leading theoretician and an interesting lesser poet.)

It is true that hundreds of young poets have emerged, and writers who were beginning their work or had yet to begin it in 1960, like Margaret Atwood and Gwen MacEwen, George Bowering and Michael Ondaatje, Alden Nowlan and Tom Marshall, have during these years established what seem to be lasting reputations and have accumulated considerable bodies of excellent verse. Margaret Atwood's *Selected Poems*, for example, has just appeared, a decade after her first collection, *The Circle Game*, and it is not only a large volume of 240 pages, but also extremely expressive in its imaginative depth and its empathetic variety. These younger poets have tended to move into the centre of the literary world, influencing fiction (Leonard Cohen's *Beautiful Losers*, Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* and Gwen MacEwen's *Julian the Magician* are among the most important recent Canadian novels and have influenced the genre greatly in the direction of prose fantasy) and writing excellent criticism, so that most of the better young critics writing in Canada today are also poets.

At the same time, there have been middle-aged poets who in the prevalent atmosphere of enthusiasm and activity have escaped what looked like being futures of mediocrity to enjoy long stretches of creative originality. Al Purdy is an example. His first book appeared in 1944, but for almost two decades he wrote low-keyed poems in rustic measures; until in 1962, with *All the Annettes*, followed by *The Cariboo Horses* of 1965, he found his own characteristic loose-running colloquial style and has since emerged as one of the best of the current poets. John Glassco, after a Bohemian youth splendidly recalled in his 1970 book, *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, virtually retired into a voiceless rusticity for almost thirty years, yet at the very end of the 1950s began to write verse again, and since then, in collections like *The Deficit Made Flesh* and *A Point of Sky*, he has produced many poems, elegiac and ironic by turn, that reflect real life and its philosophic emanations. Glassco is formally conservative, a kind of latter-day Augustan touched by the decadence (he once wrote a completion to Beardsley's unfinished *Under the Hill*), but it is typical of the contemporary poetic world in Canada that he is greatly respected among poets whose work—like that of Nichol and Bill Bissett—runs to the extremities of concretism or—like that of J. Michael Yates and Andreas Schroeder—is fervently surrealist.

Most striking of all is perhaps the way in which "older" poets, who had made names for themselves in past decades, were taken up into the stream of the movement and began to write again, not only renewing but also redirecting their poetic energies. Dorothy Livesay, whom I have already mentioned, is an example; during the past decade or so she has written with a power and sureness she never showed in her earlier leftist-1930s phase. P. K. Page emerged from many years of travel and silence to write the honed-down lyrics that figure in her *Cry Ararat* of 1967, and has been writing steadily since then poems intense in their visual sharpness and irradiated by her Sufi philosophy. And it was when he was near to sixty that Earle Birney began to wander over the world and to bring back from his travels the finest poems of his career, collected in such books as *Ice cod bell or stone* and *Near False Creek Mouth*, poems that transformed the Anglo-Saxon tortuosities of his earlier years into a loping, joking, "conversational" measure, heavy with persona and passion, with anger at injustice and love of the bright surface of life.

The consideration of themes has played such a part in recent Canadian criticism, under the not-always-good influence of Northrop Frye (who in 1971 collected his essays on Canadian writers in *The Bush Garden*) and later of Margaret Atwood (whose *Survival*—1972—with its sharp analysis of the effects of colonialism on artistic expression was influential in fostering sentiments of literary nationalism), that one approaches it with caution, since it has been the refuge of many critics ill-equipped to consider the formal aspects of poetry.

Yet it is on the thematic level that the common ground among Canadian poets is most evident. There are, of course, some poets to whom none of the convenient generalizations apply; the high aestheticism of D. G. Jones (in such collections as *Phrases from Orpheus*) and the spiritual intensity of Margaret Avison's devotional verse in *The Dumbfounding*, find no place on any distinctively Canadian map of thought, and there are many other equally private poets, with slight local or temporal loyalties, among the hundreds who have published in Canada during recent years.

Nevertheless there is a kind of historic-geographic-social continuum within which the content and the manner of a surprisingly much recent Canadian poetry can best be understood. This is the first Canadian generation with virtually no pioneer experience: the first generation free of what Frye has called "the garrison mentality", in the sense that human society lives on guard against the threatening wilderness and therefore dare not accept the present or the immediate past. Such a mentality made nineteenth-century and even early twentieth-century Canadian poets write in the forms and accept the sentiments of a known and secure Old World, which seemed to guard them against the hostile emptinesses of their own land but also against the equally hostile nuclei of population south of the border. The sense of the United States as a hostile presence has hardly diminished, and its dark thread of apprehension continued to run through Canadian writing, as Al Purdy's anti-American anthology *The New Romans* clearly demonstrated, but the wilderness, and the past when the ancestors first experienced it, are being explored intensively by poets who realize not only that they have a meaningful history but also that they have a land which, at worst, is harshly neutral and indifferent, and at best magnificently lovely.

If one excepts E. J. Pratt, who saw such matters in an ambiguously optic way when he wrote his poems about the Jesuit martyrs and the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Canadian history had surprisingly little appeal for earlier Canadian poets. Even in the 1950s it was a minor theme, but recently it has assumed major importance. One finds Margaret Atwood reliving the trials of early British immigrants in *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, Al Purdy tracing the Loyalist record in *In Search of Owen Roblin*; John Robert Colombo ransacking the writings of William Lyon Mackenzie for found poems; Susan Musgrave in a series of collections (most recently *The Impstone*) exploring the mythology of Indians on the Pacific Coast; and a whole covey of poets celebrating the métis rebellions of 1870 and 1885. Even more striking has been the poetic attempt to come to terms with the vast and climatically extreme expanses of unsettled Canada that in the past have been the despair of painters and poets alike. Until recently even the settled prairies, which produced many striking novels of human endurance (e.g. Sinclair Ross's *As for Me and my House*), were singularly unprodductive of poetry. Lately, however, younger poets like John Newlove, Dale Zieroth and Andy Suknaski have written with remarkable evocativeness about living and travelling on these plains. Indeed, the long Canadian highways have inspired so many recent poems that Doug Fetherling made an anthology out of them, entitled *Thumbprints*.

Patrick Lane in particular has succeeded in his poems (the last collection being *Beware the Mouth of Fire*) in expressing the strange contrast between the highway towns (often decaying after less than a century of life) and the magnificence of the mountain wilderness through which the great road passes. Sid Marty, a game warden in the Rockies, has written in *Headwaters*, a book of poems about the Rockies distinguished by clear observation and tight narrative, and Eli Mandel, whose selected poems appeared recently under the title of *Crusoe*, has caught the special despair of those prairie villages which the great highways are by-passing and killing. In other poets — Raymond Souster and Miriam Waddington in eastern Canada, Tom Wayman in the west — the splendours and miseries of Canadian cities are evoked, and one remembers that this is also the generation when Canada, despite its vast land area, became in terms of population one of the most urbanized countries in the world.

It would be an oversimplification to speak of recent Canadian poetry as a poetry of place and past, yet such are the presences that most powerfully haunt it.

The quest for Grove

By Alec Lucas

FREDERICK PHILIP GROVE:
The Letters of Frederick Philip Grove
Edited by Desmond Pacey
584pp. University of Toronto Press (Books Canada). $Can 25.

This book is the last of many contributions the late Desmond Pacey made to Grove scholarship. His early studies, however, were not concerned with biography. He then accepted unquestioningly Grove's account of his wealthy, Old-World, Swedish-Scottish parentage, his hobnobbing with European intellectuals, and his hoboing in America until he settled down in 1913 as a Manitoba school teacher. It is now known this wholesome story is false. Grove was Felix Paul Greve, a German born in 1879, a writer and acquaintance of Gide and Stefan George, a scrounger, jail-bird, bounder, an alleged suicide. To help in identifying Grove and Greve, Pacey has included fifteen letters written when Grove lived in Germany (but does not mention the discovery in 1973 of parallel English and German texts of a Grove-Greve poem). The 520 letters of Grove's Canadian period (1913-48) also lift Grove's mask a little, for, when caught out on dates, Grove pleads bad memory, and when caught up in ambition, boasts of his European editions of *Gulliver's Travels*. The rest is silence. Even in the intimacy of letters to his wife, he remains a fallen peer. "Ottawa", he brags, "is Dukes and Lords; I'm at home among them."

Grove's letters reveal little of Grove, but much of Grove. They present two Groves. The one is the proud husband, the snobbish celebrity on lecture tour, the executive with Graphic Publishers. The other is the protagonist of an anatomy of despair who spent his last years on an Ontario farm. There he found life largely a matter of poverty and poor health (which breaking down almost entirely in 1944 left him an invalid) and authorship a thing of squabbling with publishers and refurbishing his old manuscripts. Grove saw his plight as tragic. Yet, except for his indomitable will, he had little of the heroic in him. He had the pride that goeth before a fall, but never recognized this as a flaw. Even success did not sit well with him. He held in contempt almost all who came to hear his lectures (except the women who led eyes ever telling her wife, flocked round bee), the very people whose plaudits so puffed him up and whom he damned for not buying his books. Ready to take credit for success, but not blame for failure, and lacking a sense of humour, he sought relief often in self-pity and bitterness as he saw his German dream of America fading, Canadians, failing to recognize his superiority, had denied him his rightful status.

Grove was human enough to have strengths as well as weaknesses. His letters to his friends and to his wife and his comments on his son and the death of his beloved daughter disclose a warmth of feeling that comes as a welcome relief to the arrogance of many of them. In those to his wife, however, one wishes he had not mentioned to her the cost of his gifts or included a almost every letter, alongside references to cooperated multi-millionaires, the joyful tidings that more soiled underwear for home-laundering was in the mail. Indeed, whatever the Mr Grove the letters reveal, Mrs Grove most certainly comes through as a loyal and devoted wife.

Grove the man of letters makes a much better impression than Grove the man. He was obviously familiar with European literature. He was a perspicacious critic, judging by his discussions of the art of fiction and of his Canadian contemporaries MacLennan, Ostenso, de la Roche, Knister, and Child. He could be cranky, dogmatic, and envious. Fundamentally, however, he based his evaluations on solid literary grounds and on a dislike of shallowness, even in critics who praised him, though to the very end Pacey never seemed to realize that Grove preferred discriminating criticism to favourable reviews.

Grove was not an great letter writer, yet [illegible] interesting not only [illegible] interesting themes and situations, but largely because of the directness of Grove's self-revelation. So essentially are the letters focused on him that, like a well-drawn character in fiction, he comes fully alive. That he writes less cumbrously here than in his novels and essays adds much to his self-portrait.

The book has its faults. The editor is sometimes cloyly self-laudatory, and his insertion of his own book on Grove in the Grove chronology is inexcusable. The notes are a bit repetitious. Slips occur: *Look Homeward, Angel* and the translations of some letters are incorrectly dated. There is a great and unexplained gap in the letters between 1914 and 1925. Pacey has, however, filled in a most extensive background for those included, and, all in all, his book is very important to the study of Grove. It marks also a noteworthy advance in Canadian literary history, for it is the first collected edition of the letters of any Canadian author and the beginning of the kind of study that the country's literature has long needed.

Transatlantic exchanges

By Esmond Wright

PETER LYON (Editor) :
Britain and Canada
Survey of a Changing Relationship
191pp. Cass. £7.50.

The twelve papers printed in *Britain and Canada* were composed for or written after a conference at St Catherine's, Cumberland Lodge, in 1971. The contributors are a conclave of experts themselves for the most part so North American in background that for many of them their precise nationality must be almost elusive. They include the late Alastair Buchan, taken as a raw youth of seventeen to Ottawa, when his Scottish Borderer father was made Governor General and becoming, among many other things, a Canadian marine; two Canadian contributors (James Eayrs and Freda Hawkins) who were themselves British immigrants; Canadians Norman Hillmer, John Holmes and Arthur Smith, who were largely British-educated; and Harry Johnson of the London School of Economics and Chicago, and Max Beloff of Buckingham and All Souls, who are transatlantic polymaths. Indeed, when there can be this degree of easy transatlantic academic exchange, where and what is the problem to be analysed? The blurb asks: "Are relations between Britain and Canada steadily drifting apart . . . are they being stabilised and redefined . . . are they bedevilled . . .?" A cynic might reply: "Are these loaded and jargon words not, in fact, academic inventions seeking to create a problem that exists only in the minds of colloquy-organizers? Has not Canada, in fact, reached smooth and near-total independence, and is that not all that there is to say?"

The Commonwealth, the North Atlantic triangle, the problems of the forty-ninth parallel, yes. But what is special, and if special, worrying, in the bilateral British-Canadian relationship—if relationship it now is? Or does this cynicism just reflect that old irritating English superiority? For, Dr Lyon tells us, when the first suggestions were made by the Canadians that this conference be held, there was a tendency for the British to ask "What is there to talk about?" For Canadians, given their history, given the overwhelming fact that between 1945 and 1970 over 900,000 British immigrants have gone there (constituting 28 per cent of all Canada's post-war immigrants) the nature of their identity and of the Anglo connection (Dr Lyon's curious word for so Scotch-Irish a flowering) to them matters a great deal.

It is never easy to organize a coherent and purposeful colloquium, and between 1971 and 1976 much water has flowed down the St Lawrence. There are dated references here (to, for example, American devaluation) and it is all pre-British entry into the EEC. The Institute of Commonwealth Studies' earlier studies were on themes more manageable, if even less capable of solution, than this — imperialism itself, Malaysia, the military in Ghana—and sharper in focus.

And this particular conference, in all its wide-ranging character, seemed—if the conference report fairly reflects it—to have found difficulty in defining its terms. Perhaps it reflects a neurosis in both countries that was not about their relationship but about their own role in the world, each now a less-than-sovereign region (one of North America, one of Western Europe), each mindful of its former past and part in an imperial nexus, each suffering as much from nostalgia as from a loss of political and economic clout.

That said, these papers are interesting for three reasons. First, as history. Alastair Buchan in his all-too-short and evocative memoir, and Norman Hillmer in his study of O. D. Skelton, vividly convey the old (or is it auld) regime: when the Canadian tie was not with the Raj or the "Anglos" but with the lone shieling on the misty Island, and all of them from Cape Breton to Vancouver recalled—however mistily—the Hebrides, or the Gorbals, or Ulster. A substrand in the book is this recurrent Scottishness: especially vividly sketched in Skelton's psychological turning away into Canadian nationalism out of distaste for the Anglos: "British we were", he said, "but English in the sense of Southern English we never were." And one notes John Holmes's balanced essay the throw-away remark: "Now British professors are regarded as a welcome leaven (in this more favourable Canadian image of the British immigrant, the decline of Oxbridge English has certainly helped)." And in the sparkling essay by James Eayrs on the roots of irritation and in the prickly assertiveness of Prime Minister King and O. D. Skelton in the 1920s and 1930s, one sees that steady erosion of automatic Commonwealth solidarity in the name of Canadian nationalism. This it seems is where the divide begins. There is useful history here.

Second, there is the striking omission in the collection: Harry Johnson and Arthur Smith discuss it in economic terms; but the central fact in the thin bilateral links between Ottawa and London is, simply, Washington. It is the great economic giant dominating every aspect of Canadian economic and cultural life, dominating the training of Skelton and King eroding their faith in London, the permanent brooding presence at all the feasts—in Max Beloff's happy phrase, "Canada represented, in the imperial councils, the absentee voice of the United States and on occasion this could be decisive". It clearly dominated the conference discussions, and especially in the corridors: it needed more obvious attention among the formal papers, even if the Smith and Johnson essays are useful in themselves. One might note also the relative neglect of Quebec.

The third theme is simple, and cuts through all the sophisticated striving to define a relationship that is surely as varied as are Canadians and British themselves. Palmerston said it a century ago: in foreign policy there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests. The interests are many and not by any means primarily political: 900,000 British, still pulled in both directions, partly remorseful, partly guilty, partly assuaged by affluence, on whom Freda Hawkins writes frankly. Lawrence Martin makes this point directly in noting that the historical links between British and Canadian forces matter less nowadays, but common defence aims and shared facilities and techniques do count. The moving away of Canadian support over Suez, and over the Gulf and Rhodesia are disturbing signs of the real divide, as was Canadian coolness over British problems in the Caribbean in the 1950s.

Just as the Anglo-American special relationship was only an extension of the remarkable accord of Churchill, Roosevelt and George VI, so was the Canadian-British relationship click and strong in John Buchan's era. Richard Hanney made his money on the veld and not in the Klondyke or in the Peace River country. But he and old man Blenkiron knew that there was a third and massive giant, neither Canada nor Britain. And to talk of a bilateral relationship—stimulating though its asides are—is to omit today's brooding Prince of Denmark. The relationship now is not bilateral but tripartite. A few months ago, a student review at McGill University put it succinctly: "Canadians spend half their time trying to persuade Americans they're not British, and the other half trying to persuade the British they're not Americans."

There is, however, a rider to be added. There is now a chair in Canadian studies in Edinburgh and a Canadian Studies Association exists in Britain. They are overdue—and very welcome.

Spending and voting

By H. S. Ferns

HOWARD R. PENNIMAN (Editor) :
Canada at the Polls
The General Election of 1974
310pp. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Paperback, $4.50.

The growing concern in Canada about Canadian-American relations manifest in all the Canadian political parties has generated in the United States a disposition to study seriously what the Canadians "are on about", and to cease relying on a few massive, complacent generalities about undefended frontiers translated into operational terms by quiet diplomacy. *Canada at the Polls* is edited by an American, but written by several Canadian political scientists of top calibre; its object is to explain in a detailed, professional way what an election in Canada means, who participates, what happens and with what results. The assumption of the editor and publishers is that the American public can best be served by learning some facts about Canadian politics analysed and presented dispassionately and in Canadian terms with no more than an occasional explanatory comparison with American practice. The result is an excellent book indispensable to an understanding of contemporary Canadian politics.

The Canadian political process had its origin in the representative system established in the late eighteenth century in the British colonies in North America left over from the American Revolution. Representative government inevitably focused the attention of the voters upon local, immediate and practical concerns, leaving to the colonial executives and the Government in London the broad, bewildering and often expensive problems of administration and general policy-making in the great world. This preoccupation with the local and particular has never been lost; Canadian politics are still very much concerned with local and provincial interests, ways of life and popular preferences and impressions. Ideology and general propositions about policy count for very little, and personal, professional and regional interests, ideas and prejudices very much. Interests which are continental and/or international in character have long been obliged to come to terms in some way or other with this strong, long-standing and well developed bias. How they do so is one of the major elements in the Canadian political drama.

One of the ways is to spend money. Just how much was spent in the election of 1974 and where it came from are not easy to discover, but K. Z. Paltiel has done his best. He has come up with an estimated expenditure by the candidates of all parties of $Can10,690,483, plus expenditures by the headquarters of the parties which seems to have amounted to another $3,500,000 at least. There was a correlation between money spent and electoral success. It cost on average $23,256 to elect a Liberal; $19,495 to elect a Conservative; $13,952 to elect a New Democrat and $5,373 to elect a Social Credit member of Parliament. The Communists elected no candidates; but they spent only $777 per candidate. The only independent to win in 1974 spent more on his victory than the successful Liberal: $24,211.

Money may talk in Canadian elections, but how it is spent to produce the right noises is the critical matter. In the election of 1972 the Liberals put themselves too much in the hands of advertising experts and media men. These came up with an advertising slogan which was supposed to win the election: "The Land is Strong". The response to this slogan was well represented by the remark of one Canadian farmer: "My land is made strong by real cowshit not Liberal horseshit." The Liberals nearly lost the election, and were obliged to limp along as a minority Government with the New Democrats for a crutch. In 1974 they put the business of winning in the hands of a political strategist, Senator Keith Davey.

Davey did a masterly job. Of course, he had the advantage of some egregious errors by the Conservatives and the New Democrats and the illness of the Social Credit leader, but even so he worked to a brilliant "game plan". Leaving to the Conservatives the business of telling Canadians how to solve the problems of inflation and rapidly rising prices, he ordered his troops to concentrate on what the Liberal Government had done and would do to help particular interests to adjust to high prices. This came across as strong, well-defined, particular messages to farmers, pensioners, industrial workers, etc, while the Conservatives and New Democrats floundered around with plans to control wages *and* prices, *or* just prices.

Then Davey made leadership an issue. Canadians tend to admire intelligence in their leaders more than good teeth and sexy grinning. Davey had in Trudeau an asset so far as intelligence goes. Surveys showed that the Canadian public did think Trudeau more intelligent and more able than the Conservative or New Democratic leaders. Davey decided to capitalize on this, but not by letting Trudeau loose as had been done in 1968 during the period of Trudeaumania. Trudeau may be intelligent, but he is also arrogant, rude and well endowed with aristocratic disdain for boobocracy. Davey therefore decided to use Trudeau under tight control working to prepared scripts delivered to the public via television and radio. No debates were allowed, and no press conferences. The only television interviews permitted were ones with an old college friend, the emollient Robert Mackenzie, and another with a one-time supporter, Patrick Watson. The whole campaign was described as neo-traditional, and this is just what it was: the same bag of tricks as MacDonald, Laurier and Mackenzie King used to use, but all of them scripted for television. Now that Canada is an electronic village the old stuff goes down better than ever.

Dreams and demons in Quebec

By Cedric May

VICTOR-LÉVY BEAULIEU:
Jack Kerouac
A Chicken Essay
Translated by Sheila Fischman
170pp. Toronto: The Coach House Press.

Manuel de la petite littérature du Québec
286pp. Montreal: L'Aurore.
$Can11.95.

Don Quichotte de la démanche
278 pp. Montreal: L'Aurore.
$Can6.95.

With ten years' hindsight, it is becoming increasingly possible to question the positive achievements of Quebec's "quiet revolution" of the 1960s. Consistently, in his prolific work, "a million words in seven years", on his own admission, Victor-Lévy Beaulieu implies that the euphoric sense of liberation experienced by the Québécois since 1960 has been too superficial to have a lasting effect on the collective imagination, arrested in its development by a formidable array of complexes. Beaulieu recognizes in Kerouac a blocked creative imagination which betrays his Canadian origins. His "essai-boulot" on Jack Kerouac of 1972 now appears in translation, a "chicken-essay" because of the analogy reader/writer: eater/eaten, on a similar analogy to the one by which Rabelais presented *Gargantua* to the reader as a juicy marrow-bone.

Beaulieu is attracted to the "pope of the beat generation" by resemblances he sees between himself and the Franco-American novelist. "I recognize myself in his childhood", says Beaulieu. Kerouac's parents emigrated to New England from the same part of the south shore of the St Lawrence in which Beaulieu spent his early years. Kerouac comes from Little Canada, Lowell, Massachusetts, Beaulieu from Petit Canada, Trois-Pistoles, Quebec. Kerouac exhibits the nostalgia, the family dependence and particularly the mother and grandparent fixation, the religious obsessions, the craving for affection, the necromania, the disorientation, the delirium of the recent urban immigrant from a traditional rural background which Victor-Lévy Beaulieu recognizes and shares. Before Mailer wrote his *American Dream*, Kerouac had written the American nightmare; and Beaulieu is the author of *Un Rêve québécois* (1972), the fable of violence mirroring the aggression the Front pour la Libération du Québec clearly have revealed by its provocative action during the 1960s. "The impossibility of cheerfulness, joy and peace", "the unbiblical cord that tied him to the mother", "that great fear of death" — all this Beaulieu saw as French Canadian in Kerouac. "Jack was so French-Canadian in his ideas about love, holiness and paradise, so folkloric, so derisory", the last word implying that he expected to be disregarded because he could not believe in his own reality. Beaulieu is struck by the large number of "monsters, idiots, neurotics and depraved people" Kerouac put into *Doctor Sax*, and Beaulieu's own novels are full of such representatives of a dying culture. Beaulieu is drawn to Kerouac by his use of Franco-American slang, so close to the speech and its "lyricism of despair" which is the vehicle of much of Beaulieu's powerful writing. Kerouac's characters are "mad or sick people who burn the candle at both ends", and Beaulieu's are similarly beings compulsively compelled to the quest for an absolute Grail. Finally, Beaulieu shares Kerouac's ambition to write "one vast and simple book", to make "frescoes of the sum of the benefits of daily life", and there is no better definition than that of Beaulieu's own intentions as a novelist.

Beaulieu's *Jack Kérouac* is a highly subjective essay. "Autobiography is the choice I make from my own lies", he admits, and he is similarly suspicious of biography. He frequently breaks for a "grosse Molson", a Montreal beer, includes snatches of conversation with his wife which refer to the torture of writing, to his laziness, to his fear of drying up. He uses what he calls a "cut-up" technique, a montage of moods, preoccupations, asides, that suggest the conditions in which the essay was written, at the furthest remove possible from the antiseptic detachment of the academic exercise. Justifiably, he feels that the tribute will be the more honest, the more unashamedly he displays his *parti pris*. His habits of work and his attitudes he offers as his credentials.

In the process, this essay tells us as much about Beaulieu as it does about Kerouac, though it does serve a useful purpose in dismantling the myth of Kerouac as the pope of the beats, and in insisting on the Canuck hangover. It is instructive to read it side by side with other works the prolific young Quebec writer has published more recently but wrote at much the same time. We see that Beaulieu's writing is all of a piece, a remark he makes somewhere about Kerouac's work. Beaulieu's *Manuel de la petite littérature du Québec* is a curious anthology, a museum of publications which the literary historian systematically ignores: the sermons, the temperance tracts, the lives of local saints and martyrs, the parish monographs, the improving real-life stories which he sees as indicative of a diminished existence, sacrificially borne in the cause of national survival. The essence of the collection is in the fifth chapter where the pious biographies are classified as follows: lives of children who died in infancy, told by their mother or parish priest; lives of working-class children who dreamt of becoming nuns, priests, missionaries or martyrs; the chronic sick, mentally retarded or handicapped of any kind who sought refuge in religion and who were held up as worthy examples; the accounts of true religious vocations and the curious excesses to which they were a prey.

Far from presenting this small-minded pietism to the scorn of the reader, Beaulieu adopts an attitude of sadness and anger:

> Cette littérature souterraine, pleine de fous, de névrosés, d'infirmes, d'ivrognes, de mystiques, de martyrs et de malades, avait, devait avoir un sens. . . . Cela ne nous révélait-il pas un inconscient collectif qui cherchait maladroitement à se manifester, à s'exprimer et, finalement, à se libérer?

A novel like *Don Quichotte de la démanche* is just as instructive. The pun of the title is characteristic of Beaulieu's disrespect for the solemnity of high literature, as are his eccentric spellings (gesteux= jester; ouétrice, zippeur; ichoumes; babailles = bye-byes). Demanche suggests démence, but also the French Canadian démanché, meaning either physically handicapped or at odds with everything. His Quixote, by his eccentricity, calls into question the stereotyped thinking and the self-importance of the culture in which he moves. This was Beaulieu's eighth novel in seven years, another chapter in the saga of the Beauchemin tribe, another mask for the author to assume as he follows the dictates of his "décalcomanie".

This novel strikes me as one of the best so far because the central character, Abel, is a novelist, marginally more lucid than Beaulieu's other protagonists and offering many insights into the art of Beaulieu, the author. It is frequently a moving book as we identify with Abel's expression of the anguish of the artist and the torture of writing. Inventive as ever, Beaulieu weaves his novel around a minimum of "facts": Abel, abandoned by his wife who is sick of being a writer's widow, suffering from a weak heart as a result of childhood polio, collapses at his desk and is taken to hospital. So, the anguish of the artist and his concern with death is set in a perfectly natural context.

The rest of this lengthy inner monologue is made up of Abel's phantasms, nightmares and hallucinations, relating to his fears of death, loneliness, persecution, violence, illness, suffering—his own and that of his friends and animals—and there is a wealth of animal imagery, connected with states of anxiety and frenzy. His intention is to exorcize these phobias and complexes but he is not unaware that at times his habits get in the way. His eroticism and obscenity, extreme in places, are the dangerous outpouring of his loneliness. Gin is one of the only defences left to him against the night. His logorrhea is his sickness and his salvation. Clearly, there is no simple remedy for living.

Beaulieu's considerable merit lies in the fact that he is not defeated by the forces of incoherence he recognizes within himself. Like others before him, Gaston Miron with his "aliénation délirante", Jacques Ferron and his portrait of cultural disorientation, Réjean Ducharme and his "conscience avalée", he sees this vertigo as endemic in Quebec, sees the euphoria of the 1960s as dangerously deceptive, an enormous swindle, and continues patiently to point to the ominous and grotesquely disproportionate superego hanging like a cloud over Quebec. Quebec has not yet finished with its hang-ups. I like the playwright Jean-Claude Germain's tribute to those like Miron, Ferron and Beaulieu whom he sees as the vigilantes of Quebec: "C'est le rêve inlassable des créateurs qui empêche le ciel du Québec de nous tomber sur la tête." The "ciel de Québec", a term borrowed from Ferron, is the collective subconscious, the real world of the imagination, distinct from the world of everyday reality, both of which worlds are made transparent by their derisoriness.

"Beaulieu's thankless task, thankless because his work is easily misunderstood and because his considerable polemical journalism and his involvement in the world of publishing make him more enemies than friends, is to exorcize the two dreams of Quebec. The first of these is the product of Quebec's recurrent tendency to euphemize, to indulge in wish-fulfilment, and can be summed up in the one word "le fun". The second is the unacknowledged and insidiously poisonous collective subconscious, the demons of Quebec's past. This crippled Don Quixote is far from mythic. He identifies the intangible threats to the sanity and self-realization of his people and tilts at them with a desperate glee which is touchingly heroic.

"Two Grey Nuns", photographed by Ellinson and Company in Canada, c 1860, now in the Ralph Greenhill Collection in the National Gallery of Canada: from An Enquiry into the Aesthetics of Photography (97pp. Toronto: The Society of Art Publications), which first appeared in the December, 1974, issue of the magazine artscanada, with the collaboration of guest editor Geoffrey James, and is now published in hardback.

The island of no return

By Peter France

RÉJEAN DUCHARME:
Les Enfantômes
283pp. Paris: Gallimard. 38fr.

Les Enfantômes is a search for time past. It is a book of wandering, the wandering of the Québécois Vincent Falardeau through a chaotic life and of his middle-aged mind as he seeks to régain the boy he once was. At the end of the book a note from Réjean Ducharme tells us that Vincent "wrote these crazy memoirs in an attic, lit by a candle stuck in a bottle of Seven-Up, he liked the lighting to be weak and shaky". This candle sets the tone: similarly suspicious of biography, it frequently breaks for a "grosse Molson", a Montreal beer, includes snatches of conversation with his wife which refer to the torture of writing, to his laziness, to his fear of drying up. He uses what he calls a "cut-up" technique, a montage of moods, preoccupations, asides, that suggest the conditions in which the essay was written, at least inside this overall chronology there are shifts and surprises. The language too, is never allowed to settle in any one mould, moving to and fro between the formal and literary ("Ce fut son apogée"), the lyrical, the conversational, the truculent and the near-incoherent. The European reader's eye is inevitably caught by the everyday language of Montreal, but this is perhaps less important than the Quenean-like play on words (seen first in the title, as in the titles of Ducharme's earlier books, *L'Océantume*, *La Nuit qui vogue*) and the frequent movements of lyrical vehemence in the middle of a casual, subconscious and often parodic narration.

Les Enfantômes is like a literary equivalent of a Godard film, complete with jump-cuts, talismanic references to green eet (the wind in an open car is like the flags on Bosch's "Ship of Fools"), verbal provocation, and half-mocking addresses to the reader/spectator. And, as often with Godard, a single dominant tone underlies the apparent incoherence. Here it is one of desperate nostalgia, nostalgia for childhood and its wild freedom, nostalgia for the mother, but above all for the lovely sister Périlée. We learn dimly that both mother and sister have killed themselves and that the aging Vincent lives in guilt at surviving them and even greater guilt at his inability fooling their deaths. It is evident that Vincent sacrificed his lost paradise, a paradise that he tries to keep alive in the "marvellous island" of imagination; it is her figure that dominates all the women who flicker through these pages.

In a note accompanying his first novel, *L'Avalée des avalés*, Ducharme wrote: "S'il n'y avait pas d'enfants sur la terre, il n'y aurait rien de beau." Here too, many years later, one still reads a desperate refusal of adult seriousness and boredom, partly represented by Vincent's English-Canadian wife Alberta Turnstiff. As in most French Canadian novels there are plenty of allusions to national problems, but these do not serve any political commitment, only a general rejection of the oppressive world. No doubt all sorts of objections could be made to this out-and-out romanticism, but rather than preach it seems better to enjoy the vigorous movement of the language in what the narrator, perhaps remembering Céline, calls his descent to the end of his rope.

The exercise of power

By C. E. S. Franks

J. L. GRANATSTEIN:
Canada's War
The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government 1939-1945
436pp. Oxford University Press. £11.

J. W. PICKERSGILL:
My Years with Louis St. Laurent
334pp. University of Toronto Press (Books Canada). £10.05.

PETER STURSBERG:
Diefenbaker, Leadership Gained, 1956-1962
278pp. University of Toronto Press (Books Canada). £8.60.

JOHN G. DIEFENBAKER:
One Canada
Volume 1: The Crusading Years 1895-1956
298pp. Macmillan. £6.95.

LESTER B. PEARSON:
Mike
The Memoirs of Lester B. Pearson
Volume 3
338pp. Gollancz. £6.

In 1939 Canada was unimportant, largely rural, and struggling with the devastating effects of the Great Depression. By 1968, Canada was an important industrial country with a population twice that of 1939, an extremely high standard of living after five decades of prosperity, and a recognized position as a middle power. During those years of change and growth Canada had four prime ministers; Mackenzie King, St Laurent, Diefenbaker, and Pearson. Each of those men is the subject of recent books, and these studies fit together to form a fascinating, complex picture of political leadership in Canada.

J. L. Granatstein, a historian, treats Mackenzie King from the perspective of a scholar. J. W. Pickersgill was a senior civil servant before becoming a Liberal member of parliament and cabinet minister. He was a close friend of St Laurent's, and is an unabashed partisan. The first volume of Diefenbaker's memoirs ends when he was elected leader of the Progressive Conservative opposition in 1956. Peter Stursberg, a journalist and member of the Ottawa press gallery, offers a collection of excerpts from interviews of key actors for the 1956-62 Diefenbaker years. The third volume of Pearson's memoirs, which were carried to completion by others after his abrupt death, covers his years as leader of the opposition and as Prime Minister. The periods, the people, and the events of the five volumes overlap and form a continuous interwoven chronicle of the problems and processes of Canadian politics.

Not surprisingly, much of the energy of all four prime ministers went into nation-building and nation-unifying. Canada is an absurdity as a nation-state, as others besides General de Gaulle have pointed out. Its populated belt stretches 4,000 miles from ocean to ocean but is hardly more than a few hundred miles wide for most of this distance. This huge length is divided into widely different geographical regions, and these cleavages are further compounded by French-English, Catholic-Protestant, French and English versus "other ethnic" divisions. Regionalism and federal-provincial tension, have always been at the heart of Canadian politics, as has been the slow, difficult task of trying to assert a Canadian identity in face of powerful outsiders—Britain in 1939, and the United States by the time Diefenbaker took office.

Mackenzie King, though his cabinet divided and he nearly resigned over conscription, which French Canada bitterly opposed, was able to create a strong national government because of the war. Partly because of the great war effort—Canada mobilized as large a proportion of its resources as Britain—the Second World War, as Professor Granatstein shows, was good for Canada. The Gross National Product more than doubled, a huge industrial capacity was developed, and for the first time in Canadian history a powerful and extremely competent central civil service emerged, capable not only of administering but also of creating far-reaching economic and social policies. By 1944, as in Britain, planning for the peace was well under way, and schemes were drawn up by the government for programmes like family allowances, old age pensions, social security, government aid to housing and industry, health insurance, improved unemployment insurance, resource and agricultural development, assistance to returning veterans, and alleviation of the financial inequalities between provinces. King's Liberal government, one of the first in the world to do so, adopted Keynesian economics to cope with the transition to peacetime. Most of these ideas had been proposed in the Depression years, but without the war it is doubtful whether they would, or could, have been refined into feasible policies.

These policies were not all adopted in the early post-war years. One of the surprising features of the later regimes of St Laurent, Diefenbaker, and even Pearson is how little they had to add to the social policies that had been developed and suggested by 1945. Much of post-war social policy innovation has not been a question so much of what, for that had already been established during the war, but of when, and how; of waiting until the right combination of politicians, administrations and political climate emerged for a proposal from King's regime to be refurbished and adopted.

The St Laurent era, from 1948 to 1957, was politically the least turbulent. Pickersgill, who considers St Laurent "the greatest Canadian of our time", suggests in *My Years with Louis St Laurent* that the reason was that

> Mackenzie King, when he saw a problem that looked almost insoluble, did nothing whatever about it until he was quite sure everybody in the country realized there was a problem. Then he found a solution which was not always first-rate but, because it was a solution, people said he was a great statesman. When [St Laurent] saw a problem on the horizon, [he] almost always found a solution before the public knew there was a problem, and sometimes, before [his] colleagues knew there was a problem. . . . The verdict of the Canadian people was that Canada was an easy country to govern, and that anybody could govern Canada, and they decided to let anybody try.

But the St Laurent years, from Pickersgill's account, were not years of great innovation. The biggest new policy was the building of the trans-Canada gas pipeline. And although the pipeline has proved to be desirable and successful, its birth was marred by a failure to gain public support and by inept parliamentary handling that in 1957 brought the Liberals down and the Progressive Conservative government of Diefenbaker in.

Diefenbaker is an enigma, and the odd man out—partly because he has been the only non-Liberal Prime Minister in most present Canadians' lifetimes, but also because of his identification with the "Little Man", the poor, the neither English nor French, and the west. And he is the only one who could be described as a failure as Prime Minister, although these volumes of his memoirs and Stursberg's materials and before the real failures begin.

From both Stursberg's and Pearson's accounts emerges a striking picture of Diefenbaker's political ineptness. There were valuable achievements during the Diefenbaker years, including the establishment of a workable hospital insurance scheme, and improvement of the lot of western farmers, but his government, by 1962, lost its majority (the greatest ever in Canada), and then was replaced by Pearson's minority government the following year. Diefenbaker's administration was marred by indecision, vagueness, and uncertainty. But even his right decisions harmed him.

The main damaging issues were the cancellation of the contract to build Canada's own fighter aircraft, the Avro Arrow, the firing of James Coyne, the governor of the Bank of Canada, and continual problems in developing economic policy including a drastic and badly timed and explained devaluation of the Canadian dollar in the midst of the 1962 election campaign.

In each of these the choice the Diefenbaker government finally made was the right one, and each could have been made rather than lost support. But Diefenbaker alienated the press, and the choices were made and presented in such a way that it was almost impossible to see their good side. Pearson very astutely notes, in assessing this period, that

> the financial and economic systems in all democratic countries now rest so largely on confidence, on a foundation of belief rather than of fact, that if the people lose confidence in a government, the misfortunes that might have happened in any event are magnified and aggravated.

Pearson's opposition played superb politics in weakening confidence in the Diefenbaker government; Diefenbaker bad politics in educating the public and gaining consent. Pearson emerges from these books as the cannier and more ruthless fighter. He had the habit of success and a will to win; Diefenbaker was a defence attorney, accustomed to losses, and unfamiliar with the exercise of power. The differences come out in their memoirs. Pearson's begin with that a successful Secretary of State for External Affairs, having just won the Nobel Prize for Peace, and record his string of successes with only one real defeat—by Diefenbaker in the election of 1958. His witty memoirs are those of a man accustomed to high office. In contrast, Diefenbaker writes as an outsider in the corridors of power, a man who often was a loser, and the best of his memoirs come in the portrayal of the hardships and heartbreak he shared in rural western Canada during the bitter Depression years.

The Pearson government established universal medical health insurance, the Canada Pension Plan, and began to rationalize the muddles of defence policies and weapons systems. However, in his memoirs, Pearson concentrates on his efforts, successes and failures in Canada-United States relations (his description of his dealings with President Johnson is good tragedy and comedy), in keeping Quebec within the Canadian confederation, and in nation-building activities such as having a Canadian flag accepted by Parliament. This is perhaps a correct emphasis, but one wonders what Pearson would have stressed if he had been able to complete his memoirs himself.

Canadian politics were not based on class struggle in the three decades from 1939 to 1968, and these books indicate that there can be dangers in the regional politics which override class politics in Canada. Regional and federal-provincial politics are non-ideological, and lead to definitions of problems in terms of federal-provincial arguments over the distribution of political power and the crude geographical allocation of resources. Argument over gross distribution between regions has blurred problems of distribution of wealth between classes and groups within regions. Perhaps it is not surprising that priorities and goals for modern Canada were established during the Second World War, when the dominating importance of the national war effort, and the corresponding dominance of the federal government, facilitated planning on a national level. The difficulties these governments had in forming policies indicate how much of the attention and energy of Canadian governments must go into regional and structural problems in the federal state, and how little is left over for substantive questions of policy.

These studies give insights into the kinds of leadership that a Canadian Prime Minister must exert. Leadership of cabinet and the executive comes first. In this Diefenbaker was the least successful. His cabinet was divided, the civil service confused. For all prime ministers leadership of the party appears to have been a much easier task. The caucus (party in Parliament) generally has been subservient to the plans and proposals of a united cabinet, and the party outside Parliament of little real importance or influence except at election time. King went for years without a party convention, did not visit his constituency during one six-year period, and remained as Prime Minister in 1948 even after (for the second time) he lost his seat.

More important than party leadership appears to have been leadership of the country through achieving public support, or at least acquiescence, for policies and administration. Parliament appears to have been important: an essential step in the downfall of Diefenbaker's government was demoralization in Parliament, as it was also in the defeat of St Laurent. Pearson never had a majority in Parliament, and had difficulty in controlling it—which in turn led to election difficulties. The press also was an important link in the chain between Prime Minister and Parliament, and Diefenbaker suffered more than the others from a bad press, although St Laurent also lost press support by 1957.

The absence of well-organized political parties with a broad and stable membership has made the links between Prime Minister and public through press and Parliament all the more important, and the consequences all the more severe when the public and the press do not understand, or cannot accept, government policy. There are virtually no safe seats in Canada, and intangible, mutable public opinion has at times led both parties to victory, and defeat, in every part of the country.

It has sometimes been argued that the decline of Parliament is more striking in Canada than elsewhere, but one of the strongest impressions from these books is how important Parliament still is. Pickersgill is especially impressive in describing parliamentary tactics and the way the St Laurent government kept the opposition in line. The confrontation of St Laurent with George Drew, who preceded Diefenbaker as leader of the Progressive Conservatives, shows a subtle mastery of procedure and gamesmanship that deserves a place in history.

The last years of Diefenbaker's government, and Pearson's years, were marred by bitter obstructionism and dogfighting in Parliament. The divided factions in Parliament mirrored the divided country which Pearson, like Diefenbaker, could not lead convincingly.

The chronicle of this acrimonious and unprofitable struggle in Stursberg and Pearson suggests that the origins were partly in the conflicting characters of Diefenbaker and Pearson, and partly in the structure of Canadian politics, with the Liberals the perennial kts, the Conservatives the perennial outs. Diefenbaker and the other opposition parties spoke for, and his party represented, the many groups (a majority of English-speaking Canada) left outside the Liberal coalition of Quebec and middle-class Ontario. Pearson's great success was in handling Quebec during the Quiet Revolution, his failure in the west. The unruly and divided opposition parties indicate that these were neglected regions and social classes in Canadian politics. Diefenbaker succeeded in giving the west a voice in Canadian politics, but he could not unite the factions in his party into a coherent government. He failed with Quebec.

Some of the problems arose because his party had been in opposition for twenty years. He was faced with a civil service that had grown accustomed to another party which represented different interests. His new cabinet had no experience in government, and over the previous decades men of ability had been more attracted to the successful Liberals than to the losing Conservatives. His party and cabinet were composed of diverse elements that had never worked together, and whose main binding force was their hostility to the Liberals.

In contrast, Pearson's first cabinet had five extremely able and experienced ministers and eight former civil servants of whom four, including Pearson, had reached deputy minister rank. Pearson unwittingly makes a comment on the curious imbalance of Canadian parliamentary democracy when he concludes "it seemed to me that the superior quality of our Cabinet stemmed in part from the fact that we had so many experienced in government on the administrative side".

Diefenbaker failed in grasping the reins of power, perhaps because the dreams and visions which drove him were unrealizable. That such dreams could win such great support shows how far political leadership, political realities, and public understanding, had separated in Canada. They were still not back together by the time Pearson left office.

TLS Commentary

The lonely juggernaut

At the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, until August 8, is the tenth of the biennial John Moores exhibitions. This is the largest and was once the most prestigious of exhibitions of contemporary British paintings. Its reputation among serious artists has declined in recent years because it has been felt that the judges, who select the paintings exhibited from about 2,000 submissions as well as awarding the prizes, have not done their work well. The news that the jury this year would consist of the American critic Dore Ashton, the dealer John Kasmin, and Peter de Francia, who is Professor of Painting at the Royal College of Art, aroused hopes that the show would now be dedicated to the quality rather than the diversity of current art. Any such expectations have been disappointed. Although the first prize of £4,000 went to the best painting in the show, John Walker's "Juggernaut with Plume—for P. Neruda", and the second to Howard Hodgkin's "Cafeteria at the Grand Palais", most of the other awards were capriciously bestowed. Laurie Baldwin took the third prize. Incompetent, even meretricious work has been included, much good or decent painting rejected. The jury's intention was perhaps to make the exhibition as "representative" as possible. Whether that is so or not, they have produced a sorry display.

John Walker's painting stands alone in the exhibition as a work of real significance. It belongs to a series—and it may not be the best among them—which Walker has made in England and America in the past two years. It is a large vertical painting, some 8ft high by 4ft 6in wide, fashioned from a good number of irregularly shaped pieces of collaged canvas. At first sight this format appears to have been roughly engineered, but the bold configurations have been combined with much tenderly brushed paint and rubbed chalk: the painting has in fact as fine a regard for surface effect, for touching, eliding, scouring and travelling, as anything Walker (a connoisseur of *facture*) has ever produced.

Walker has often used one or two collaged elements in his paintings to disturb the suavely inflected continuum of his surfaces: now his surfaces are used to bind together the hewn and sheared nature of the work. His endeavour seems to be to restore a fully painterly application to a picture so physically layered that the original canvas is submerged. Since the first characteristic of a collaged shape is that it is not fluid, a programme of this kind demands virtuosity. Walker has this, certainly, and it may be a danger of such painting that it has an air, not of contrivance, but of something *effected*. None the less, it seems to me that Walker is exploring collage more thoroughly than at any time since its invention in Cubism.

Picasso and Braque first pasted shapes on to their canvases to make a forthright denial of the recessional window of traditional painting. But the technique also broadened and outlined the major configurations of their pictures, which then abandoned the soft and nuanced pigment of previous Cubist painting. The pictures became sparser and rougher: the ground was often left bare, or was painted with a deliberate lack of finesse. Walker's Juggernauts are the first very good paintings, with the partial exception of Robert Motherwell's, to have returned to this situation. What was then radical can now be seen as challenging and enriching. The culture of the modern tradition will sustain new art in many ways of this sort. A lot of new painting will come to return to part-to-part composition with locking interlors, thick paint and volume physically built rather than simulated.

One might be clearer about the direction if more good paintings were shown. At Liverpool, the jury's exclusion of the best young—and middle-aged—abstract painters means that it is not possible to feel the strength of contemporary English art. Such strength exists, and the Arts Council must now put on a show that is critically directed, not a mere anthology. In the John Moores paintings by John Hoyland and John Golding seemed lost, hanging, surely by someone who had made the best of an unnecessary task, lacked conviction, as did a picture by Anthony Hill, the way. Previous Moores exhibitions have rescued one or two artists who had been overlooked. Not this one, though, which is also without discoveries. But I should like to see more paintings by two new artists, Christopher Jones and Ingrid Kerman.

Timothy Hilton

A few words from Kay Beck

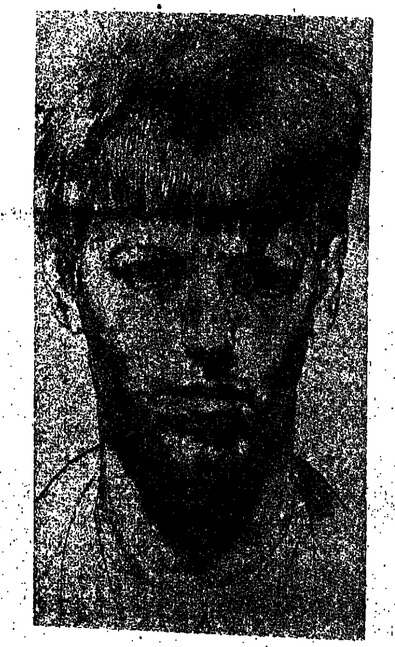
Just outside Montreal Airport there is a secondhand motor-vehicle emporium. The sign "chars usagés" gives the visitor a hint that though he may be in the streets of the second French-language city of the world, they wear their *roues* with a difference. This difference is composed with benign, if at times remorseless, jollity by Mark M. Orkin in *French Canadian, Ité?* (128pp. Lester and Orpen. $Can8.95). Mr Orkin's technique is 'the selected and annotated glossary, using the joke phonetics pioneered for Strine by Emma Chizzit and in an aggravating little work called *Mots d'Heure, gousses, rames* (*Mother Goose Rhymes*). There is Jack Kar Chny, the founder; Kay Beck, the place; all the computed everyday words (*adidon, bibbit, midoui*) and a patriotic song with the refrain *Equi Canada, oulisa tande onequas arde fort scie.*

Mr Orkin is impartial: he has already published a similar book on English Canadian patois. His suggestion is that Anglophone and Francophone are misleading terms (perhaps, he argues convincingly, derived from Anglophobe and Francophobe): neither language is spoken in Canada. (He also argues that since the last census showed that 54 million people did not speak English and 144 million did not speak French, it follows that 20 million do not speak French or English; but many of the jokes are better than this.)

The development of Joual (Quebec French), as serious lexicographers have shown, has not been simply a downhill slide into a Franglais jargon, but such words join to the ear of a speaker of non-French: *badiguer, sur le bonme, bosté, feker, fainio*, and the interesting hybrid *bougrer l'camp*. The *char* (or *bazon*) has generated a number of horrors: *bombardier, brake, mofler, plaguiss*. *Un chmin roffe* may well cause *un flat*.

Nothing in this well-intentioned little book would suggest that there are serious Québécois writers. The fun is benign enough, but Québécois, with good reason, don't feel benign about the way their language has been treated in the past, and demand something more than even-handed fun. If English-Canadian speech contained a single word of French origin, this comparatively waggishness might not seem out of place. But as Mr Orkin says of unilinguism, "this term is difficult for most Anglos to understand. For generations their Kay Beck has been unilingual, i.e. English".

An expanded version of "Information Wanted" can be found this week on Page 594. A further selection of readers' queries will be appearing shortly.



The early self-portraits of Stanley Spencer is the frontispiece to a catalogue (50p) of an exhibition called "An Honest Patron: A Tribute to Sir Edward Marsh" at the Bluecoat Gallery, School Lane, Liverpool (open until June 5). The exhibition celebrates Eddie Marsh's genius as collector and patron of the arts and of literature; his literary protégés included Rupert Brooke, James Elroy Flecker, Robert Graves, D. H. Lawrence, Isaac Rosenberg and Siegfried Sassoon. "I buy pictures by the pricking of my thumbs", he said, "but I *know* about poetry."

Eddie Marsh's patronage was initially made possible by what he called "the murder money". After Prime Minister Spencer Perceval was assassinated in 1812, the government set up a compensation fund, and Eddie, as one of the heirs, benefited intermittently. Born in 1872, his interest in modern painting began with his purchase in 1911 of Duncan Grant's "Parrot Tulips" for £15: he moved on to [illegible] Sickert for a judgment on a picture Eddie Marsh had encouraged Mrs Churchill to buy. "Our little friend Eddie", said Sickert, "is not without a certain idiot flair." It was not only flair, but kindness and commitment as well; the Tate and the Contemporary Art Society were for him, John Rothenstein said, "friends to be fought for". He gave one of his best loved paintings to the Tate and another to the National Gallery to celebrate the end of the Second World War. When he died in 1953, the bulk of his collection was left to the Contemporary Art Society, which allocated the pictures to galleries throughout Britain and the Commonwealth.

O'Whitaker

"The fact is that the publishing business, within the limits of its present scale of operations, has not been doing too badly of late." Such optimism is hardly what one expects to hear these days, but it is not the British publishing business that is being referred to: the quotation is from the first number of *Books Ireland*—Ireland's answer to *The Bookseller*—a monthly review of the Irish publishing world. The second number is now out and both are available from Kingston House, Ballinteer, Dublin 14, at 33p each. There are thirty member-firms of the Irish Book Publishers' Association, a lot of whose customers are from abroad; Irish exports from the printing and publishing industries were valued at £10.8 million in 1975.

Although the first number of *Books Ireland* was strategically an "Export Number", it contained some reviews and articles in Irish as does the second. But the feature of *Books Ireland* which will prove most attractive to those with a professional interest in Ireland is the integrated catalogue—"a sort of mini-Whitaker"—of Irish-interest books in print, published anywhere and in any language. This is being printed in serial form month by month at the back of the magazine, and will be continuously revised and added to. Publishers all over the world are cooperating by filling in the index cards provided: "Telegrammes of cards" are sometimes returned in a single post. The information given in the listings so far is in a few cases so sketchy as to provoke wild surmise; "Best Irish Jokes. Nixon" is a delightfully elliptic entry. So *that's* what your man has been up to all this time.

Deterrence and disarray

By Theodore Draper

G. R. URBAN (Editor): Détente
368pp. Maurice Temple Smith. £8.

A conference called "The Business of Détente" was recently held at Princeton University. The speakers at the first session were largely critical. At the second session, the main speaker, a distinguished British authority on Soviet affairs, said that he could not conceive of listening in Europe to such critical talk of détente. He confessed, perhaps half-humorously, that he had experienced nothing less than a "culture shock".

Is there really a significant, let alone a shocking difference between Americans and Europeans on the subject of détente? Opportunely, nine Europeans and six Americans have contributed to a symposium, *Détente*, edited by a tenth European, G. R. Urban. The symposium took the form of dialogues with the editor broadcast in 1973-75 over Radio Free Europe. The line-up featured three from Britain (Sir William Hayter, François Duchêne and Leopold Labedz), and one each from Austria (Bruno Pittermann), Switzerland (François Bondy), Germany (Claus D. Kernig), Norway (John Jørgen Holst), Finland (Wolf H. Halsti), and France (Alfred Grosser).

The Americans included four professors—Robert F. Byrnes of Indiana, Richard Pipes and Adam Ulam of Harvard, Zbigniew Brzezinski of Columbia—together with former Secretary of State Dean Rusk and former Under-Secretary of State George W. Ball. A different group might very well have told us something else. They are probably more representative of ranges of opinion than of the countries they come from. Nevertheless, such an informed and loquacious group cannot fail to tell us something of more than ordinary interest.

They tell us so many different things, however, that it is hard to say just what they do tell us. An innocent bystander might be forgiven if he came out of all this high-powered discussion more confused and uncertain than ever.

I would classify only two of the European group as true believers in détente—Kernig and Duchêne. Three others—Pittermann, Hayter and Holst—accept détente but with such doubts and qualifications that their adhesion seems at best half-hearted. Halstí and Grosser never quite make a clear commitment one way or the other, but their analysis would put them in the sceptical camp. Bondy, Labedz and Urban clearly belong to the irremediably unconverted.

None of the Americans shows any enthusiasm for détente. Byrnes, Pipes and Ulam are particularly unhappy about it. The best that Ball can say for it is that it is "in concrete terms, very tenuous stuff". The most that Rusk conceded is that détente is "a dam one-eighth of the way across the river". Brzezinski weakens long enough to grant that a "limited détente" such as we have had is better than no détente at all; but when he also says that Moscow has been able "to shape détente according to its own needs and to dictate the pace", he makes one want to ask: better for whom?

There is, then, some difference between these particular Europeans and these particular Americans. No Americans accept détente in the manner of Kernig or Duchêne. Yet there are so many cross-currents among the Europeans, as well as among the Americans, that it is dangerous to extrapolate from them a European or an American point of view. Still, I could not help feeling that some ideas expressed here are more typically European than American.

In fact, I suspect that the real subject of this book is only superficially détente. It is, more deeply, European-American relations, sometimes but not always with reference to détente. Read this way, the book offers much to ponder.

One thread that runs through much of the discussion is strikingly European. It raises a painful issue at the crossroads of European-Soviet and European-American relationships. It concerns a basic assumption about the United States that needs desperately to be rethought today, particularly by Europeans. The point emerges most acutely in the views expressed by Grosser, Duchêne and Kernig, who also happen to come from the three main West European countries.

Professor Grosser, with disparing candour, tells us that the French believe that

> while Europe, including France, surely needs America for her protection, America needs Europe just as much. The American stake in Europe—both as America's first line of defence, and in terms of prestige, partnership and economic interest—is enormous; therefore, the French insist, it is wrong for us to pay the United States for our protection because Europe's protection is, in reality, America's protection.

Here we have the rationale for what might be called the principle of "protection without payment".

One of Professor Duchêne's ideas is essentially a variation on this theme. Europe, he says, is dependent on the United States for its security. Dependence must usually be paid for, but not in this case. Despite their dependence, "the smaller European powers have enough room for manoeuvre to pursue their own purposes with a larger framework and to some extent have a free ride". He also likes to believe that

> the not effect of American military power has been to create a garden wall which protects Europe from the winds and makes it possible for civilian relationships and politics to flourish. The nuclear stand off is making civilian relationships more and more important, and it is in this area that Europe could and ought to concentrate its ingenuity.

'As an afterthought, he concedes that "Europe" "must contribute something to American protection" but he hastens to add that it need not be "huge", and one would be hard put to know just what he thinks it should be. His main thought seems to be that the United States will take care of the huge military effort and provide the nuclear standoff while Europe gets something of "a free ride" and tends its civilian "garden".

Professor Kernig's main thesis is not unrelated. "Our system today", he explains, "is centred on two poles, the United States and Russia, and the stability we enjoy is entirely due to the interplay between these two principal powers". But it is Russia that he worries about. The United States is so taken for granted that his only concern is to preserve the stability of the Soviet Union. Even cultural exchange must be sacrificed in so far as it might undermine or—still worse—destroy that stability. "So we have a vested interest in the stabilization of the Soviet regime." Not a friend of the Soviet leadership, as he describes himself, he manages to convince himself that "our own security is intimately connected with the interests of the Soviet leaders". So it goes until he earnestly counsels the West, with respect to changes in the Soviet Union, that "it is in our interest to see that these changes do not throw the Soviet leadership off balance". Why? Because they might get nasty, "fight for their lives" and "make us fight for ours".

One theme in the now notorious talk last December at a meeting in London of American ambassadors by Helmut Sonnenfeldt, counsellor for the State Department, comes close to Professor Kernig's line of thinking. Most attention has been paid to the odd circumstance that Mr Sonnenfeldt's mastery of the English language did not include the word "organic". But he used the term, whatever he may have meant by it, in the context of an idea that could well receive Professor Kernig's approbation. After claiming that the Soviet policy in Eastern Europe has been "an unfortunate historical failure" because it has not been able to "go beyond sheer power", Mr Sonnenfeldt offered to help the Soviet Union get a sounder and broader base: "We seek to influence the emergence of the Soviet imperial power by making the base more natural and organic so that it will not remain founded in sheer power alone." This school of thought wants to do for the Russians what they allegedly cannot do for themselves—make their influence less unnatural and less inorganic in order to bolster their power with "attractions" they are said to lack. In the face of such unrequited generosity, one does not know whether to laugh or to cry.

To come back to Professor Kernig, we have here a system of thought which interprets détente primarily as a defence of the interests of the Soviet leadership. It is related to the views put forward by Grosser and Duchêne not in the sense that they necessarily would say the same thing but in the similarity of their double-bookkeeping. Kernig utterly ignores what such extreme Western solicitude for the stability of the Soviet Union and the interests of its leaders would do to the United States if the Soviet Union did not return the favour and prove to be equally solicitous of American stability and interests. Again, the United States is taken for granted; only the Soviet Union need be cared for. Nor is such an attitude to be found only in Germany. Grosser records a French version of the Kernig thesis—"we must do nothing to undermine the cohesion of the communist bloc". The American bloc, of course, has been fair game in France for almost two decades.

It would be unfair to suggest that only Europeans have a double standard for Russia and the United States. In the heyday of détente, Secretary of State Kissinger developed a theory—repeated as recently as last December—to the effect that the United States should proffer special "incentives" to the Soviet Union in return for "responsible international behaviour".

This once-beguiling Kissinger theory was strictly one-way. He never made the slightest allusion to Soviet incentives to the United States in return for the latter's responsible international behaviour. Not only have the Russians never offered any such incentives to the United States; they have scarcely denied that they were obliged to pay anything for détente.

Is there a European predilection for appeasement of Soviet Russia? François Bondy, an astute and experienced observer, thinks there is—and offers an explanation. Western Europe, he says, has no power comparable to the United States and, therefore, "we are much more likely to want to appease. This is not obvious to the naked eye, but the Europeans' tacit fear of the Soviet Union, their unwillingness to drive an issue home, is never far under the surface." If we may trust Professor Grosser, a mordant connoisseur of his own country's political fashions, France does it differently, but not necessarily better. There, we hardly need to be told, "to be anti-Soviet or anti-East Europe is just not the done thing: it is worse than to be unwise or even unsophisticated—it is unfashionable; and as I say, this great reluctance to be branded anti-Soviet runs right through the political spectrum". There is, of course, no such French reluctance to be branded anti-American.

Indeed, as Professor Grosser puts it, "we are especially against blocks formed by our friends; we accept the blocks of our enemies". An American, Professor Pipes, alludes to the same phenomenon by saying that the fear of war is so great in Europe, "you choose the line of least resistance, you conceal your impotence, shame all from yourself, by rationalizing your appeasement".

This awkward state of affairs is not usually brought out with such unconstrained plain speaking is especially welcome now that events have begun to catch up with some widespread European illusions. One of the most serious, reflected in this book, concerns nuclear war.

For Professor Duchêne, détente is primarily nuclear. This assumption leads him to the cheerful view that

> détente through nuclear parity between the United States and the Soviet Union has the paradoxical effect of nullifying, or certainly reducing, the major visiting card of the Soviet Union, which is its military strength, and of making the competition move into the area where the United States has its greatest comparative advantage, which is the area of civilian process.

The idea that détente is primarily nuclear has had its American protagonists. Until the Yom Kippur War of October 1973, the official American line generally made cold war the alternative to détente. But after that war, which was her between the warring parties and too cold for comfort between their arms suppliers, the alternative to détente became nuclear war. This shift made the very concept of détente virtually meaningless. For over thirty years, during hot wars, cold wars and incipient détentes, nuclear weapons have not been used even in the most trying and tempting circumstances. They were not used when the United States had a monopoly of them because they were too destructive—the *ad absurdum* of all time in the history of weaponry. When the Soviet Union became an atomic and then a nuclear power, they became too mutually destructive. And, now that the Soviet Union has achieved rough nuclear parity, they are too mutually annihilating. It is nuclear warfare's relationship to destructiveness, not to détente, that has inhibited its use. The "linkage" which Dr Kissinger imagined between détente and nuclear war is illusory; there cannot be "linkages" between such altogether different orders of magnitude. In any case, if détente is reduced to a purely nuclear dimension, it leaves all the other of the world's ills and discords—the very stuff of everyday, practical, ubiquitous international politics—outside the purview of détente. To make détente primarily nuclear is to deny it, not to prolong it.

It is mystifying how nuclear parity between the Soviet Union and the United States could deprive the Soviet Union of its "major visiting card". What parity has done, if anything, is to deprive both nuclear powers of this visiting card. Except in the most extraordinary and still inconceivable circumstances, it is unusable without at the same time being suicidal. The major misconception here arises from the failure to distinguish in the nuclear age between generally usable and virtually unusable military power. For all practical purposes, only sub-nuclear power is politically usable; politics is, in effect, sub-nuclear. We are then left, so far as Europe is concerned, with so-called conventional weapons which are the Soviet Union's real "major visiting card". If Europe cannot be defended by conventional warfare, it must put its trust in the American resolve to wage nuclear warfare on Europe's behalf. And this

brings us back to the idea that Europe's protection is still the same as America's protection, so that Europe can get "protection without payment", a "free ride" and a "garden wall".

There are, to be sure, other views, both European and American, in this book. The Norwegian Holst, in partial agreement with Duchêne, says:

> The fact that Western Europe lives off its drawing rights on the American deterrent may, paradoxically, make it feasible for the European governments to declare a certain political freedom from their dependence, whereas, the nominally independent Americans—owners and controllers of nuclear weapons—have not the same liberty because they are locked in nuclear stalemate with the Russians.

Here the image changes from "free ride" and "garden wall" to "drawing rights". The theme remains much the same—European "independence" growing out of European "dependence". There must be some nagging doubt if it appears to be a paradox. Even so, how long can nations trust their fate to paradoxes? Indeed, Holst cautions: "There has for years been an American deterrent, yet we can never be absolutely certain that the Americans would, in fact, use it to defend Europe." Holst then makes a virtue of not being sure about anything and finally places his bet on the deterrent effect of "residual uncertainty".

Holst of Finland is much more certain—on the other side. He asks and answers:

> The question is: for how much longer can Europe rely on American nuclear protection? Would the United States risk nuclear retaliation to protect Troms or Udine or even Paris, as the French have asked? I don't believe so. The American nuclear arsenal lacks credibility. I don't know if it frightens America's adversaries, but it does not reassure her allies, and this subjective factor has now assumed the force of an objective fact which weakens the impact of the whole Atlantic Alliance.

At least Holst still thinks there is an alliance capable of being weakened.

One American reaction to all this should have a chilling effect on European readers. Professor Pipes says:

> I'm not saying that the United States has no responsibility for European apathy; the flaccidity of Europe is indeed a measure of the success of American foreign policy, for we have given too much of a good thing for too long. America ought to have started withdrawing from Europe in the late 1950s when EEC was being put together.

There is surely enough blame for everyone to share. What we have been witnessing in the past few years is a mutual withdrawal, America from Europe and Europe from America. The early Nixon-Kissinger years were disastrous for European-American relations because the American masterminds of détente decided to solve their problems through deals with the putative enemy: friends became supernumerary. A recent book, *The Unhinged Alliance*, by J. Robert Schaetzel, who as United States Ambassador to the European Communities in Brussels from 1966 to 1972 should know, is an almost unrelieved horror story of American neglect of and animosity towards Europe. By the time it was too late, Dr Kissinger decided to make 1973 the Year of Europe and in a sense, though not the one he had intended, it was Europe's year to go his own way. Things have reached such a sorry state that Dr Kissinger has been making speeches in which he finds it necessary to profess his tenderest emotions for "our close ties with the individual democracies of Western Europe, Canada and Japan". He has even used the tenderly to pretend that European-American relations have been getting better and better since his unforgotten Year of Europe.

Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, by Andrei D. Sakharov, the architect of the Soviet H-Bomb who later became a dissident, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1975, has been reprinted. (127pp. Penguin. 60p). Writing shortly before the invasion of Czechoslovakia Sakharov attacks neo-Stalinism in Russia, and argues for peaceful coexistence with the West. The book includes an introduction, afterword and notes by Harrison E. Salisbury.

> Politically, Western Europe is drifting into "Swedenization", which Professor Brzezinski defines in this book as, among other things, "a gradual dilution of political interdependence between Western Europe and America". The United States is at the same time becoming more isolated and more isolationist. Curiously, Europe deplores any sign of American isolationism but enjoys the luxury of contributing to the isolation of the United States, as if the two were separable.

In the past six months, the total political isolation of the United States was advertised for all the world to behold at the United Nations. The United Nations may not have much power, but it has the power of registering political power. On December 8, 1975, a vote in the Security Council went 13 to 1, with one abstention (Costa Rica), against the United States. France, Italy, Japan, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland preferred to vote with the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania.

> The United States objected to the resolution on the ground that it one-sidedly condemned Israel for violent actions without condemning Arab violence. West European representatives explained that they regretted the "lack of balance", as the British member put it, in the resolution. But they voted for it anyway, forcing the United States into a position of total isolation.
>
> On March 25, 1976, an even more extreme, fourteen-to-one vote occurred in the Security Council. Again the United States was totally isolated. This resolution accused Israel of changing the physical, cultural, demographic and religious character of the city of Jerusalem. The American member vainly pleaded that "Israel's administration of the holy places in Jerusalem has literally and actively minimized tensions". Nations which had remained silent during all the years when Jordan had physically split the city, used the main Jewish synagogue in the former Jewish quarter of the Old City as a stable for horses, permitted a luxury hotel to be built on the site of the oldest Jewish cemetery, and refused even Israeli Arabs the right of visitation, voted a blanket condemnation of Israeli administration, even of the holy places open to all faiths for the first time in years.

It may be said that the European powers and Japan voted for this resolution for large *raisons d'état* and not for its stated purpose. Yes, that is just the point. These five powers chose to vote for what they conceived to be their national interest even if in so doing they put the United States in a position of total diplomatic isolation.

> It is quite understandable that Western Europe should act in defence of its own interests even if they come in conflict with those of the United States. These United Nations votes were but two of a number of such cases in the recent past. What is not so understandable is the notion that Western Europe has such a privileged position vis-à-vis the United States that it can do all these things with impunity. "Protection without payment", "free ride", "garden wall", and "drawing rights", may not be able to survive such conspicuous conflicts between European and American national interests.

Yet, at the end of the day [says Mr Dell], it is clear that the United States is unwilling and probably unable to play a more and more lonely hand in the difficult years of the coming years. It needs the partnership of a strong and self-confident Europe. The trouble is that the weaker and less self-confident both the United States and Europe become, the more fragile and less meaningful that partnership is. One wonders how many more political blows from both directions this partnership can endure.

Prospects, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom, by Andrei D. Sakharov. (Penguin. 60p).

H-Bomb who later became a dissident, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1975, has been reprinted. (127pp. Penguin. 60p). Writing shortly before the invasion of Czechoslovakia Sakharov attacks neo-Stalinism in Russia, and argues for peaceful coexistence with the West. The book includes an introduction, afterword and notes by Harrison E. Salisbury.

To the Editor

Mahler

Sir,—I wonder whether Robin Holloway, in writing (April 30) quite so adverse a review of two new Mahler books, by Donald Mitchell and David Holbrook, was not caught up in one of those moods of recalcitrance to which we are all liable at times, so that some inner compulsion takes over to the temporary detriment of our judgment? Such a review always tells us more about the reviewer than about the book; but I do not think that Mr Holloway is usually so scornful of the scholar's vision as he must have felt when he dismissed for "monumental triviality" that patient pursuit of minutely accurate details, that "discussion of types of music-paper", those "endless descriptions of manuscripts and their datings", which give to Donald Mitchell's study much of its enduring value. And I am sure that in another mood he could have done better than to "blench" on "almost every page" at the "dreadful sincerity" of David Holbrook's gallant attempt to link Mahler's life with his music, and not just in "the professional jargon of psychoanalysis" either: a jargon which itself perhaps suggests that the reviewer's mood was one of insecurity, and the review somehow on the defensive-aggressive line of attack.

Of course the review made some very reasonable criticisms in addition. I too think that there are considerable elements of disorderliness in both these books, but also that there is solid substance and genuine originality to which your readers' attention was not sufficiently drawn. I would not accept that either of them is a "bad" book; and Donald Mitchell's *The Wunderhorn Years* is I think an achievement which scholars and lovers of Mahler are going to find important for many years to come. May I be allowed to put in this word of recommendation for it here?

ROBERT DONINGTON.
The Cottage, 4 Keats Grove, London NW3.

James Joyce

Sir,—S. S. Prawer writes (April 23) in his most admirable review of the German translation of *Ulysses*: "I look forward to finding out why the hero of Buck Mulligan's spoof play, Toby Tostoff, turns into 'Toby Kaltbauer'." Simple. Tosroff = tossed off. The product of German masturbation = Onanie is "kalter Bauer", presumably the "Bauer" proverbially stupid etc, etc, in German is too stupid to get into vaginal warmth, or else, the semen in this unnatural way of being produced gets quickly cold. But these are conjectures. The usage is fact.

Professor Prawer is apparently also astonished at the plentiful and uncalled for anal and faecal expressions. It is, I think, well known among psychologists that the further east one goes the more frequent and jokes predominate over sexual ones. This seems to have more latterly spread into the vernacular. The prefix *Scheiss*-this, that and the other is, of course still more common than in this country. "Mother is beastly dead" is, therefore, well-translated by "Dreckig verreckt"—for the German taste; both "dreckig"—"Dreck" often used for faeces—and "verreckt", being associated with decaying corpses are clearly anal. "Scheusslich tot" would have been verbally more accurate; emotionally, however, inadequate in German.

D. J. SALISBURY.
11 Willow Road, Burton-under-Needwood, Staffordshire.

Sir,—The University of California Press, having published *A Lexicon of the German in Finnegans Wake* (Boulerice), *A Gaelic Lexicon for Finnegans Wake* (O Hehir) and *A Classical Lexicon for Finnegans Wake* (G. Hehir and Dillon; in press), now proposes to produce a "Polyglossary" covering the lexical items in all the languages other than English that are represented in *Finnegans Wake*. The number of such languages is believed to be about four, and it is proposed to record the respective glossaries on computer-discs, whence they can be combined in the final complete "Polyglossary" to be printed by computer. The "Polyglossary" will gloss the entire text of *Finnegans Wake*, word-by-word, line-by-line, omitting only the lexical information attributable exclusively to English. Both prior and subsequent to publication of the inevitably bulky final work, it is anticipated that print-outs covering one language only, or only a few languages, as well as print-outs covering separate sections of *Finnegans Wake*, will become available.

I have agreed to serve as general editor of this project, and therefore I hereby solicit contributions from your interested and competent readers. Particular desiderata at this time would be glossings of non-standard Italian such as, perhaps, the Triestine dialect, and of French, including Parisian or other argots. Numerous word-lists have already been published in *A Wake Newslitter* and similar outlets. I would appreciate hearing from the authors of all such lists, whom I shall be endeavouring to approach directly. At present I have received proposals from seemingly competent persons who are working on the Arabic, the Italian and the Spanish contents of the *Wake*.

Would-be contributors are asked please to write me at the address below. Computer production of the "Polyglossary" dictates certain constraints on the format of contributions, so all serious contributors must be guided by a style-sheet with which I will provide them on notice and request.

BRENDAN P. O HEHIR.
Department of English, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720.

Julian Grenfell

Sir,—In his review of my biography of Julian Grenfell (April 30), Jon Stallworthy says that I transpose two words of Julian's poem "Into Battle". This is not so. I have the manuscript of Julian's poem in my possession. I expect that Mr Stallworthy refers to the fact that after Julian's death a line of the poem was printed as "And only joy of battle takes". In fact Julian wrote, as I have printed, "And joy of Battle only takes". I have suggested in my book how some words in Julian's poem came to be altered.

NICHOLAS MOSLEY.
21a Heath Street, London NW3.

Agrarian Reform

Sir,—I should like to take up one or two points raised by Laurence Whitehead in his very balanced account of *Agrarian Reform and Agrarian Reformism* (April 2). The points arise mostly from my own (deliberate) ambiguities.

Mr Whitehead seeks a definition of "reformism" in the book; in fact, the title came to my mind after the essays had been written, so the issue of what the authors were meant to understand by the term is neither here nor there. The title is intended merely as a description of the book's contents. The word "reformism" is intentionally ambiguous, being pejoratively understood in contrast to "revolution" but also referring to ideologies of agrarian reform which were revolutionaries only among people who were further right. [illegible] connotation of [illegible] being one to my "airborne *narodnik*".

An airborne *narodnik* is characterized by at least two features: he, or she, flies about the world advising governments on agrarian policies. He also holds broadly speaking *narodnik* beliefs: that the peasantry are a more or less homogeneous social group, that they can all therefore reap roughly equal benefit from redistributive measures, that these measures can be carried out without concern for other interests and sectors outside agrarian society, and that the peasantry embody the virtues of poverty, rationality and cooperativeness.

It might be further added that he or she sees fit to advise governments in underdeveloped countries, carry out redistributive agrarian policies. He is "airborne" in a second sense—he does not have his feet on the ground politically.

Now it is true that, when I say that "we should seek out ways in which those groups who favour effectively articulate their interests in the Indian polity" anywhere else for that matter, press beliefs which have some in common with those of an airborne *narodnik*. We both want to do a thing which in the end will benefit the peasantry, or part of the peasantry. But to say that I can escape the accusation" with direct ex ophera of being "airborne *narodniks*" is an exaggeration. I do not share the *narodnik* ideology. What Mr Whitehead really wants me to be saying (with the apparent italics and the "*sic*") is that there is something wrong with conducting research aimed at increasing the effectiveness of rural social organizations and movements, and I believe there is something wrong with this. On the contrary.

There is no point for me in arguing about the agrarian problem in underdeveloped countries if my work is not to contribute to the improvement of the lot of the groups I sympathize with and believe that it is worthwhile. Actually it needs to do nothing probably only one thing: that through the organizational development of those groups—and other organizations as well. My deepest difficulty with "airborne *narodniks*" arises from my belief that the contribution I make itself fit, if it is in roundabout and indirect way, and that it does not necessarily imply any involvement with government agencies.

All this can be quite easily misstood by referring to the brief article elsewhere in the same issue on *Asterixwissenschaft*. My airborne *narodnix* are the heirs of certain Gaulish magicians who had recourse to a magic potion of mystical collectivism when faced with depredations of Caesar's legions. Stolypinius and Stalin were divided into *kulakix* and *n'kekix* and other *catdgorix*. The solution offered, as Russell Dalton observes, an escape but no resolution.

DAVID LEHMANN.
50 Belvoir Road, Cambridge.

Ezra Pound

Sir,—A correction, please, to your review (Commonplace, April 30) of the Ezra Pound exhibition at Sheffield University, in which you state I gave a "vigorous reading of my father's poetry". In fact I read only my own translations from Arabic and Persian poetry and talked about them. I have never read my father's poetry in public, nor lectured on him. My poetry is a private pleasure, not the lectures, for those who "confess".

OMAR S. POUND.
12 Kinnaird Way, Cambridge CB1 4SN.

Sir,—I am very grateful for the space you gave to our Pound Exhibition and Conference in your Commentary section on April 16. However, I would like to draw your attention to one small error which is, of some importance to Omar Pound. (He has not mentioned it to me, I am writing entirely on my own initiative.) The Ezra column it is stated, is the "sole reading of his father's poetry" he has given. This is further from the truth. Omar read from his own translations from Arabic and Persian poetry; he did not read any of his father's poetry. Since Omar has taken a great deal of care to establish himself in his own right as a translator and avoid trading on his father's renown I would much appreciate a correction could be published.

To avoid possible difficulties with the Ezra Pound Literary Trust, I would also like to make clear that I have not printed "the draft text of Canto IV" as stated in the last paragraph. What I have printed is the last twenty lines or so from the first published version of Canto IV and the whole of the current text. (This with the permission of Faber and Faber.)

P. R. GROVER.
Department of English Literature, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN.

The Wrongs of Copyright

Sir,—It was with mild amusement that I began reading Michael Holroyd's confession about staying in bed ("The Wrongs of Copyright", April 23). How enviable a biographer he is if he does not need to consult libraries or whose foreign policy. This is stated clearly in the introduction: "The racial ideology of South Africa was basic to the very nature of that society": "The conflict [between South Africa and Africa] . . . was about ideology"; "Ideological conflict is therefore the dominant theme" (pages 2-3). This theme is reiterated throughout the book and, despite his angry denial, is applied with the qualification discussed below, to the whole period 1945-73.

For example, the conclusion to the section on the "outwards-looking policy" (of about 1967-73) states: "This book is informed by the view that the policies of the South African governments towards Africa in the years since the Second World War are best comprehended under the category of ideology. The policies were the result of distinctly ideological preoccupations and they were ideological in character. . . . There were, however, subtle shifts of emphasis which tended in the later years to favour *Realpolitik* rather than some more narrowly ideological nationalisms. . . . Basically, however, South African policy towards Africa remained totally subservient to an ideology of white domination in southern Africa which hardly changed in its key features since the beginning of the period under review" (page 127).

I nowhere complained of a "crude conflict" between material factors and ideology, but of the failure to define ideology or say how it relates to economic and security interests.

Mr Nolutshungu came up against the problem—which confronts those who interpret behaviour in terms of "articles of faith" instead of (material and security) interests—of how to explain change. He denounces me for implying that he could be so "pleaded" (his word, not mine) as to explain change by suggesting that the ruling whites became "more materialistic". Yet he specifically says this. His conclusion reemphasizes the primacy of ideology, but allows for the conversion of white society to a more materialistic orientation. . . . All these developments tended to instil the element of *raison d'état* into the ruling party's official ideology" (page 301). Moreover, I took his frequent references to the growing importance of *Realpolitik* (nowhere defined) to mean something similar. What I thought the growing emphasis on *Realpolitik* in South Africa and the supersession of some Afrikaner racial sensitivities by the ascendant principle of state interest" (page 126).

I argued that South African policy has always sought to serve the (material and security) interests of the ruling elite. For example, South African policy towards the training of blacks does not now, *and did not in the past*, depend on "articles of faith" (page 87), but on how this affected white interests. Interests not ideology were and are, I believe, the key to understanding their behaviour and foreign policy.

Mr Nolutshungu now almost seems to imply that he *also* said this. Yet, despite confusions and contradictions in his account, he clearly did not. His castigation of his own ideological approach as "bone-headed" suggests that he no longer finds it fruitful. His paper in Thompson and Butler's *Change in Contemporary South Africa*, published after I wrote my review, confirms this. In his new paper there is scant reference to ideology, which takes second place to social and "economic transformations . . . [which] created the basis of political and ideological controversy" (page 374). The thirty-page paper is full of (welcome) references to "economic and structural changes", to class interests, to Afrikaners, whose name did not appear either in the bibliography or the index of his 328-page book.

Only the bone-headed never change their minds. Mr Nolutshungu is to be congratulated on changing his. But it is inexcusable that his possible irritation with his own (clearly documented) past views leads him to make wild, unfair allegations against me, and particularly regrettable that he resorts to the unsavoury tactic of writing that my views come "more naturally to white South Africans of a certain turn of mind". He misrepresents me when he claims that I concede only his ability to understand "blackmen's countries". I commented favourably on his treatment not only of Zambia, but also of Mozambique (*white-ruled* during the period covered by his book) and of British policy towards southern Africa. My reason was that in these sections he was concerned with economic and strategic factors and with the "realities of power".

Like Mr Nolutshungu, I left South Africa because I found its race policies intolerable (though I now believe that recent changes, both in white interests and black power, create *some* hope of major improvements). The insinuation that I am a racist who judged his book by his skin colour is false. I am upset that *he* judges *my* review on these reprehensible grounds.

MERLE LIPTON.
15 Eaton Place, Brighton.

'South Africa in Africa'

Sir,—Sam C. Nolutshungu's letter (April 23) about my review of *South Africa in Africa* contains serious allegations and insinuations. Yet his book amply confirms my contention that he saw ideology as the key to understanding South African foreign policy. This is stated clearly in the introduction: "The racial ideology of South Africa was basic to the very nature of that society": "The conflict [between South Africa and Africa] . . . was about ideology"; "Ideological conflict is therefore the dominant theme" (pages 2-3). This theme is reiterated throughout the book and, despite his angry denial, is applied, with the qualification discussed below, to the whole period 1945-73.

For example, the conclusion to the section on the "outwards-looking policy" (of about 1967-73) states: "This book is informed by the view that the policies of the South African governments towards Africa in the years since the Second World War are best comprehended under the category of ideology. The policies were the result of distinctly ideological preoccupations and they were ideological in character. . . . There were, however, subtle shifts of emphasis which tended in the later years to favour *Realpolitik* rather than some more narrowly ideological nationalisms. . . . Basically, however, South African policy towards Africa remained totally subservient to an ideology of white domination in southern Africa which hardly changed in its key features since the beginning of the period under review" (page 127).

I nowhere complained of a "crude conflict" between material factors and ideology, but of the failure to define ideology or say how it relates to economic and security interests.

Mr Nolutshungu came up against the problem—which confronts those who interpret behaviour in terms of "articles of faith" instead of (material and security) interests—of how to explain change. He denounces me for implying that he could be so "pleaded" (his word, not mine) as to explain change by suggesting that the ruling whites became "more materialistic". Yet he specifically says this. His conclusion reemphasizes the primacy of ideology, but allows for the conversion of white society to a more materialistic orientation. . . . All these developments tended to instil the element of *raison d'état* into the ruling party's official ideology" (page 301). Moreover, I took his frequent references to the growing importance of *Realpolitik* (nowhere defined) to mean something similar.

Sir,—We would appreciate it if you could publish a record of an order this office executed in October, 1975.

Our records show that after receipt of payment of $217, on October 10, 1975, Photographic Service dispatched 1,075 sheets of Xerox copies of the Shaw-Trebitsch correspondence (1902-1950) to Mr Michael Holroyd, care of Robert Leacher, 155 East 71st Street, NYC 10021. This correspondence is the longest single run of letters by Shaw in the Berg Collection.

Mr Holroyd (April 23), who may not have received this shipment, might think it proper to acknowledge it in your columns in public.

HERBERT BOUSCHER,
The Research Libraries, The New York Public Library, New York, NY 10018.

'Islamic Sicily

Sir,—M. V. McDonald, in a most interesting notice of Aziz Ahmad's *A History of Islamic Sicily*, takes a severely restrictive view of Islamic influence in that country. He suggests that "the claim that the Arabs left any lasting influence in Sicily at all seems rather hard to support".

To take one detail: should he not give some importance to architecture? I am thinking not only of such wonderful buildings as S Cataldo and S Giovanni degli Eremiti at Palermo, but in particular of that architectural reuse of ancient columns which was soon to determine a new set of mighty proportions for church architecture. Some of the columns reused in Sicily carry Islamic inscriptions; they must therefore have been first reused for Islamic buildings before they were built into S Cataldo and Walter of the Mill's Cathedral. I doubt whether the impressive reuse of whole forests of columns in Cairo includes anything as old as the Palermo examples. If the habit of reusing ancient marbles on a massive scale was not invented in Islamic Sicily, it certainly flowered there. The adaptation of ancient buildings, which of course occurs in Sicily as it does elsewhere, is another matter; so is the decorative reuse of bits and pieces stuck into arches and walls. The originality and freedom of Islamic appreciation of classical antiquities in Sicily is astonishing and admirable, and its influence has been lasting.

PETER LEVI.
Campion Hall, Oxford.

The English Association

Sir,—As a contribution to the study and enjoyment of English language and literature, the English Association—now in its seventieth year—proposes to put out a guide to societies concerned with the subject. This is intended for general use by individuals who are not necessarily scholars, and also for libraries, schools and the societies themselves. It will provide in a concise form information about the objects of societies, the addresses of corresponding officers or secretaries, the terms of membership, the frequency and place of meetings, and some particulars of their publications. It is hoped also to list a number of literary collections and specialist libraries.

The societies in the guide should include not only the many which are interested in the study of an individual author (from Jane Austen to H. G. Wells) or a special field or period (bibliography to medieval drama) but local groups, large and small, old and contemporary. Included also should be some of the organizations which exist partly or solely to encourage and promote in various ways the use and knowledge of English language and literature, spoken and written.

Work has begun on collecting information, and we should now be glad to hear from any such society which has not so far been contacted or from which we have not yet had a reply. To enable us to produce the guide with up-to-date information, we ask that any society wishing to be included should write without delay to this office for a form on which the information may be entered. We shall need to have these forms returned by June at the latest for the editor to produce an integrated volume within a reasonable time.

R. SHARROCK.
Chairman, The English Association, 1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park, London W4.

Canadian Magazines

Sir,—May I request the hospitality of your columns to draw attention to a project that should be of interest to all those concerned with Canadian literature? The Working Party on Library Holdings of Commonwealth Literature is currently compiling for eventual publication a list of Commonwealth periodicals of literary interest, giving their locations, wherever possible, in British libraries. This undertaking is supported by a British Library grant.

As researcher/bibliographer to this project I have so far compiled a list of some 3,000 titles, of which approximately 650 are Canadian. Provided a periodical is written in English, and contains a significant amount of creative literature or literary criticism, it is a candidate for inclusion.

Despite the large number of titles already recorded, I am constantly discovering new little magazines from Canada. Often these may simply be one specimen number held by a library, and yet this could be an invaluable source of information. I would therefore be particularly interested to hear from anyone with knowledge of little magazines from any part of the Commonwealth either in public or private collections.

Not only will this list provide much needed information for those studying Commonwealth literature, but also to locate odd numbers of magazines scattered round the country, and possibly suggest to librarians some redistribution of those hitherto hidden resources.

RONALD J. WARWICK.
Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2.

Among this week's contributors

WALTER ALLEN's books include *Tradition and Dream*, 1964 and *Transatlantic Crossing*, 1971.

QUENTIN BELL's books include *Ruskin*, 1963 and *Bloomsbury*, 1968.

DAVID BLEWETT is a Lecturer in English at McMaster University, Ontario.

R. R. BOLGAR is Reader in the History of the Classical Tradition at the University of Cambridge.

HOWARD BECKER is Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at McMaster University, Ontario.

J. M. CAMERON's books include *The Night Battle*, 1962 and *Images of Authority*, 1966.

ANDREW CAMPBELL-BROWN is a Benedictine monk at Prinknash Abbey.

F. L. CARSTEN's *From Schöneer to Hitler* will be published later this year.

STEPHEN CLARK's *Aristotle's Man* was published last year.

H. A. CLEGG is the author of *The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain*, 1970.

R. L. DE LA VIGNE is a Lecturer in Medieval History at the University of St Andrews.

THEODORE DRAPER's books include *Castroism: Theory and Practice*, 1965 and *Abuse of Power*, 1967.

H. S. FERNS's books include *Argentina*, 1969 and *The Argentina Republic*, 1816-1971, 1973.

C. E. S. FRANKS is a Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford.

DOUGLAS HILL is the author of *The Opening of the Canadian West*, 1967.

H. G. KORNINGSBERGER's most recent book is *The Habsburgs and Europe, 1516-1660*, 1971.

STEPHEN KOSS's *Nonconformity and Modern British Politics* was published last year.

CHRISTOPHER LEVENSON's collections of poems include *Cairns*, 1969 and *Stills*, 1972.

DAVID MARTIN is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics.

CEDRIC MAY is a Lecturer in French Language and Literature at the University of Birmingham.

GEORGE MIKES's recent books include *The Land of The Rising Yen*, 1970 and *The Spy Who Died of Boredom*, 1973.

CHAIM RAPHAEL is the author of *The Walls of Jerusalem*, 1968.

ARTHUR SHEPS is Associate Professor of History at Scarborough College, University of Toronto.

RICHARD STAKON is a Lecturer in the Department of Government at the University of Essex.

B. A. SPARKES is the author of *Black and Plain Pottery of the 6th, 5th and 4th centuries* BC, 1970.

BRIAN STOCK is Senior Fellow of the Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto.

PHILIP TAYLOR is the author of *The Distant Magnet: European Emigration to the United States*, 1971.

GEZA VERMES is the author of *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 1962 and *Jesus the Jew*, 1973.

C. VERMEULE is Keeper of the Department of Classical Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

MAURICE WILES is Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford.

GEORGE WOODCOCK is the Editor of *Canadian Literature*.

EDMOND WRIGHT's books include *Benjamin Franklin and American Independence*, 1966.

Canadianists in conference

The establishment at Edinburgh of a Centre of Canadian Studies (the first such centre in Europe), and the success of the first annual conference of the British Association of Canadian Studies (BACS), held recently in Birmingham, reflect the growing interest in Canada as a field of learning and research. The setting up of a similar association in France and the rise of individual centres of Canadian studies in Italy and Germany show how widespread this interest has become. At the BACS conference—organized by Harry Ferns (political science), Cedric May (French), and Alan Williams (geography)—Ted Miles, founder and director of the school of Canadian studies at the University of Vermont and currently president of the American Association of Canadian Studies, spoke of the proliferation of Canadian studies in the United States; there are now nearly 600 teaching members of his association.

In Britain there are, of course, special reasons why Canadian studies have emerged as an important discipline. The fortunes of the two countries have long been intertwined. Undoubtedly the personal tie is important. For example, many of those at the BACS conference have taught or done research in Canada, have married and brought up their children there, and are still members of Canadian learned societies.

In many British universities, polytechnics and colleges of education, Canadian studies feature as part of a course on Commonwealth or American history, literature or law, or the geography of North America. However—and this is a development those at the Birmingham conference were encouraged to hear—Canada is also becoming a subject of advanced study for its own sake in a separate school or department.

Papers at the conference strengthened the view that it is not enough to teach Canadian economics, geography, history, law, literature, etc, simply as the practical Canadian experience of the general theories of these subjects. The new drive is not to produce scholars who illustrate theories from Canadian examples, but to develop Canadianists who will look beyond the narrow confines of their systematics, to a concern for and understanding of Canada itself.

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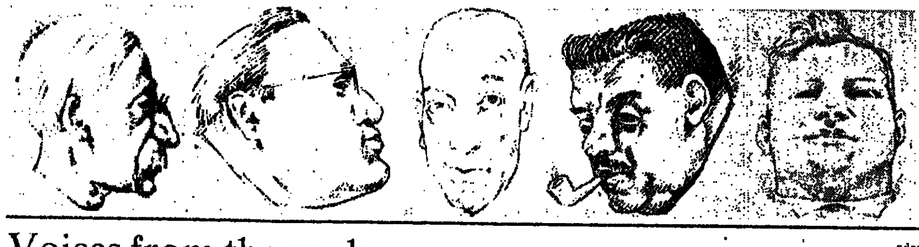

"France at the crossroads", an article in Scribners' Magazine *in 1936, was illustrated by these lithographs of Blum, Doriot, Chiappe, Herriot, and Thorez by Jacques Charlot, a Frenchman who has lived in Hawaii since 1949. They appear in Jean Charlot's Prints, a catalogue raisonné of his work by Peter Morse, published jointly by the University of Hawaii Press and the Jean Charlot Foundation, Honolulu. (450pp, including over 700 illustrations, and 29 colour plates, $85).*

Voices from the ranks

F. L. Carsten

ULRICH KLUGE:
Soldatenräte und Revolution
Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft 14
518pp. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht. DM92.

The German revolution of 1918 has intrigued many historians and political scientists. Was it a genuine revolution and, if so, why did its impetus evaporate so quickly? If its principal achievement was the introduction of parliamentary democracy, was it not unnecessary since this change was brought about by the constitutional reforms of Prince Max of Baden, which made Germany a constitutional monarchy a few weeks before the outbreak of the revolution? Was not the true revolution a "revolution from above" which anticipated the revolution from below? Ideas such as these were first put forward by the eminent left-wing German historian Arthur Rosenberg nearly half a century ago and have been repeated many times since.

In the 1960s a younger generation of German historians began the serious study of the events of 1918-19 and the publication of the principal sources. Eberhard Kolb's *Die Arbeiterräte in der deutschen Innenpolitik* (Düsseldorf, 1962), a detailed study of the workers' councils, broke new ground and established the great importance of the council movement in Germany, which was clearly inspired by the Russian soviets yet very different in character. Exactly as in Russia, the German councils were councils of workers *and* soldiers, but in Germany the peasants played only a subordinate role in the whole movement. This clearly was one of the weaknesses of the movement: one of the causes of its early decline.

Although the workers' councils have been studied in great detail by historians in both Germanies, there has been no comparable study of the soldiers' councils which in most places worked in harness with those of the workers. Ulrich Kluge's *Soldatenräte und Revolution* attempts to fill this gap. Drawing his material from many scattered archives and other sources, Dr Kluge describes the activities of the soldiers' councils, their demands, their ideas about the formation of a democratic army, their services in bringing back the German armies from the occupied territories in their clashes with the military High Command, and their quick disappearance from the political scene. But the title of the book is rather misleading, for Dr Kluge deals above all with the struggle for power during the three months following upon the outbreak of the revolution. This was a many-sided struggle between the new government of the People's Representatives, the High Command under Hindenburg, and Groener, the workers' and soldiers' councils, and many different military units—such as those returning from the front, the various *Volkswehren*, and finally the new volunteer formations or Free Corps.

As is well known, it was the High Command which supported by the volunteer units emerged triumphant from this struggle for power and succeeded in imposing its will upon the weak and divided government. Following the view of Professor Kolb, Dr Kluge does not believe that this was the inevitable outcome of the so-called "silence" of the social-democratic leader Friedrich Ebert and General Groener concluded on November 10, 1918, a day after the outbreak of the revolution, in his opinion the new government merely instructed the High Command to carry out Germany's obligations under the armistice treaty and to bring back the German armies from the occupied territories in west and east. In this view the "political alliance to fight against Bolshevism" in Germany was only concluded six weeks later, on December 22, when forces under the orders of the High Command were used to try to eject a "red" sailors' unit from the palace in Berlin: events that led to the breakup of the coalition government of right-wing and left-wing social democrats, and ultimately to the disastrous "Spartacus Rising" of January 1919 and its suppression by government troops.

Yet this seems a somewhat mechanical interpretation of the events of November and December. What began as a declaration of loyalty of the High Command towards the new government from which it expected the preservation of law and order and the early summoning of a constituent assembly, quickly developed into an "alliance", or not so much against "Bolshevism" (which was extremely weak), but against the workers' and soldiers' councils; in the eyes of the ministers, they threatened to create "chaos" by their interference with the customary processes of government and their demands for democratization in the administration as well as in the army. Among the partners of this "alliance" the government was much the weaker and needed the support of the military.

Already on December 8 Hindenburg had put forward their political demands, strongly directed against the workers' and soldiers' councils, in the form of an ultimatum. On December 23 Groener wrote in his diary that he telephoned Ebert "and *demanded* from him that he accepts our protection. Otherwise we can no longer go along with him". What began as an understanding on certain more or less technical issues had become an "alliance" in which one side was able to dictate to the other.

Why did the social-democratic ministers accept these demands and make no attempt to dispense with the services of the officer corps, even after the safe return of the German armies and the virtual completion of demobilization? Dr Kluge emphasizes two factors: the "unshakable belief in the loyalty of the officer corps in general and of the High Command in particular", a belief partly due to the conviction that the old order was dead; and the ministers' hostility to the more radical socialists and the council movement (which they identified with "chaos"). They very much overestimated the danger threatening from the extreme left and they colossally underestimated the danger coming from the right. The fatal misjudgment of the situation was no doubt largely caused by a fear that Germany might go the way of Soviet Russia, that a more radical revolution might follow the first, moderate revolution. Yet in truth the situation of the two countries was entirely different, and the German Spartacists were a tiny minority who only gained strength from the punitive expeditions of the Free Corps, the forces created to combat the alleged "Bolshevik danger".

Another factor, which is not mentioned by Dr Kluge, was the danger threatening the eastern provinces of Prussia from the Poles, the German desire to hold on to the disputed areas and, if possible, to reconquer the province of Posnan—an undertaking that required well-trained troops and leaders, and above all an efficient High Command. Thus considerations of foreign policy powerfully reinforced domestic fears and misapprehensions.

With the very detailed discussion of the politico-military events, the subject of the soldiers' councils tends to recede into the background. Yet the reader would like to know more about their activities and their composition. We are told, for example, that during the first week of the revolution twenty-five "selected" soldiers' councils consisted of only eighty-three private soldiers, but ninety-nine professional?) NCOs and nineteen officers. This is the only evidence on this important point: we are not informed whether this was typical, or whether in later months the preponderance of NCOs and officers disappeared.

The author repeatedly emphasizes that the aims of the soldiers' councils were reformist and not revolutionary; they wanted the war to be brought to a speedy end and a constituent assembly to be elected as quickly as possible. Politically they tended in their large majority towards the right-wing social democrats and hence quickly became suspect in the eyes of the left-wing socialists.

Yet it was under the influence of the soldiers' representatives that the national congress of the workers' and soldiers' councils adopted in December 1918 the real "Hamburg Points" which managed the removal of all badges rank and epaulettes, the election all officers by the units, and to ensure a permanent influence the soldiers' councils within the army, which was to become *Volkswehr*, a kind of popular militia.

These were radical demands rather than socialist demands, they aroused the wrath of the High Command which simply refused to accept them, and succeeded in persuading the government to side with them. Whether an efficient army could have been created on the basis of such a programme is another question which is not discussed in this book. But there can be little doubt that quite efficient *Volkswehr* units came into being in different parts of Germany (and Austria) and that the *Volkswehr* presented a real alternative to the restoration of the Prussian military system. In this respect too the policy of the High Command ruled the day, long before the Treaty of Versailles imposed a small highly professional army on Germany.

The value of this study lies not only in the accumulation of a detailed material on military operations in the first months of the German revolution, but also in the questioning of many accepted views and stereotypes. If some of his ideas are less revolutionary than the author seems to think, if some of them are stated more than once, this may perhaps be excused in a work which obviously his first. Many of the questions discussed by him certainly deserve a fresh look, free from the customary bias; and no doubt will lead to further discussion, not only of the German revolution, but of revolutionary movements in general.

Essays in a lost cause

By George Mikes

ANDRÁS RÉVAI:
A Tulsó Partról
Selected Essays.
Introduction by Zoltán Szabó.
210pp. Szepsi Csombor Circle. £3.

András, or Andrew, Révai—the son of a well-known Hungarian publisher—was London correspondent of the German-language Budapest daily, *Pester Lloyd*. Soon after Hungary's involvement in the Second World War, he, with two friends—Antal Zsilinszky, a secretary of the Hungarian Legation in London and George Bárdy, the artist—wrote a letter to *The Times* in which they disclaimed loyalty to the semi-fascist Hungarian regime and offered their help and services to the Allies against the common enemy, because they believed that this was the way to serve the true interests of the Hungarian people. The signatories to the letter were deprived of their Hungarian citizenship. They formed, with some others, an organization called the Association of Free Hungarians in Great Britain. After the suicide of Antal Zsilinszky, Révai became its president (and, in the later years, became its honorary secretary).

Révai was indefatigable in informing the British public of the situation in and problems of Hungary. Most of the essays included in *A Tulsó Partról* first appeared in English and have now been translated into Hungarian by diverse hands and published by a small literary circle of Hungarian intellectuals from a new generation of refugees.

The interest of these essays is that, like snapshots, they freeze certain historical moments and throw a spotlight on various situations, half forgotten or at least hardly ever discussed nowadays. Révai's style is somewhat flat and laborious; he has few original ideas; some of his forecasts—for example that China would remain a Soviet satellite—are patently wrong. But he has a first-class analytical mind, an impressively retentive and selective memory and a vast knowledge of history. These latter qualities raise the essays above the level of political journalism and make them worth preserving.

The first essay deals with the post-war expulsion of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia. Magyar-Czechoslovak relations have been long and troubled and neither side can claim much credit for itself. The Magyars were the masters of the Slovaks for several centuries—oppressive and arrogant masters at that. This, however, did not make the Treaty of Trianon (1920) a just one. Hungary was judged guilty by the victors after the First World War and punished for her so-called crimes. Large territories with Hungarian majorities were given to the new Czech state—and two others. Militant Hungarian revisionism was the explosive reply, it bore fruit after Munich. The Hungarians, like vultures, claimed their share from the dying body of the Czechoslovak state. In November 1938 the Vienna Award, on Hitler's and Mussolini's orders, returned large territories to Hungary. Although Révai rightly points out that it was not Thomas Masaryk's democratic state but Father Tiso's fascist Slovakia that Hungary helped to dismember, these niceties were ignored, and when their turn came once again, after the war, the Czechoslovaks expelled thousands of Hungarians from their homes with great callousness. Their anger was understandable; their acts were abominable. They made no distinction between loyal and disloyal Hungarians, between democrats and Nazis; only active resisters were spared. In August, 1945, Hungarians lost their property and even their right to work and 25,000 of them were expelled or taken to Bohemia for forced labour.

In these essays Révai did not only record history but was trying to influence it. In those days the communists were the most vociferous protesters against these summary acts of Czechoslovakia, determined to prove that they were not only admirable democrats but also ardent patriots. Révai meant to add the voice of bourgeoisie to this cry of pain.

Révai's most interesting essay deals with the 1947 elections, the only free elections ever held on Russian-occupied territory. This essay contains a masterly analysis of the parties, their origins and interests. The government coalition gained 271 seats, the opposition 140. Révai expresses his firm belief that the formidable right-wing opposition had made a fatal mistake in intending to turn away from the Russians and to lean on the United States. This just was not on the cards in post-war Eastern Europe, under Russian occupation. But Révai maintains that a compromise between communism and British-type socialism would have been possible and tolerated by the Russians.

Hungary's friendship with the West, he thought, would have been accepted had it run parallel with true and sincere friendship with the Soviet Union. A debatable point, even if anyone could have nourished such curious and contradictory sentiments. The death-knell of the Third Hungarian Republic, says Révai, was the exclusion of Thorez and Togliatti from the French and Italian governments in 1947. The Communist presence, he believes, gave assurance to the Soviet Union that no prevent war would be launched. If there was no coalition in the West, there would be no coalition in the East. Democracy was murdered; Popular Democracy installed.

This looks like yet another attempt to describe the mighty as beans of history. But it was, it was no last, desperate and belated effort to show the right way. It was—as Révai must have expected—much too late; Hungary became a Russian satellite and fell silent. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 rekindled his hope for a while: he spoke out again but then put down his pen for ever. He was deeply depressed and knew that he could be of no service any more. In June 1973, at the age of sixty-nine, he took an overdose of sleeping pills and died.

Large-scale amphibious operations were a decisive factor in assuring Allied victory in the Second World War. James Ladd, *Assault from the Sea, 1939-1945: The Craft, the Landings, The Men* (256pp. New York: Abbot; David and Charles. £5.95) is an admirable reference book for those wishing to understand the tactics and the wide range of equipment which were produced to solve the complex and dangerous problems involved in the landing of large bodies of troops and their heavy equipment against strong opposition. The scope of the book is such that the air element, which was vital to success, is not sufficiently treated although its importance is acknowledged. Otherwise the coverage is well balanced. The detailed descriptions of the craft employed and their equipment, and the nature of the planning and command procedures are all clearly presented, and are supplemented by appropriate photographs and diagrams.

The vicissitudes of nationalism

By Brian Stock

Is culture at the national level a product of the state or is the state itself a product of a nation's culture? Friedrich Meinecke asked this question some seventy-five years ago in his well-known study, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. His answer: while the state may act as an influence, it does not originate cultural activity. The state is "simply one product of the national culture along with others".

Concern over nationalism has long since waned in France and Germany, where Meinecke saw it unfolding along with romantic political theory. But it is still a central force in the less developed countries of Asia and Africa, as well as in developed nations with a colonial past. In Canada a long dormant national movement reawakened in the 1960s (see *TLS* August 28, 1969, and October 26, 1973). Since that time, nationalism has furnished a meeting-ground for economic and cultural issues that have troubled the country for a century. Both English and, to a lesser degree, French Canadian cultural patterns first appeared in the mercantile century, during the same period in which Canada, as a geographic entity, was beginning to play a minor role in the Industrial Revolution. The momentum that carried the railroads westward also created the first cultural sensibility at the national level. Ever since, the laws that govern manufacturing have also regulated publishing, radio, cinema and television. Although individual cultural achievement can never be reduced to economic relationships, the future of culture at the national level is closely tied to the country's economic destiny.

In Canada, culture and the state have taken a route that Meinecke never envisaged. Outside of Quebec, a homogeneous community's sense of identity did not flower into art, poetry and historical writing. Culture made its first appearance as a psychological phenomenon, as a collective sentiment of denial and expectation. Like the idea of the crusade in the Middle Ages, to which it has sometimes been compared, nationalism preceded and announced the real crusade, which was directly or indirectly supported by the state. This phase of growth is now at midstream. The trumpeting headlines, inaugural addresses and royal commissions persist; but nationalism is also influencing economic strategy, the educational system and even the fabric of society—its ethnic makeup, linguistic differentiation and geographic distribution. People living in Canada have grown used to marching music and symbolic paradise. It is no longer considered unusual for a government body to take a position against outsiders, foreigners in Canada, or uncharacteristic Canadians. Popular opinion has been aroused, despite the fragility of a consensus in a land whose habitable regions are about as wide as the Low Countries and two thirds as long as Russia. Even a few years ago it would have been hard to think of an un-Canadian activity; nowadays there are several possibilities. Then, the cultural scene had a few high priests but no established church. Now it has one, presided over by the gurus of the literary and publishing world in close cooperation with the other media. One inevitable consequence of a dominant church and ideology is the proliferation of sectarian movements and heresies.

Rejections of nationalism are now commonplace. If the majority of Canadians are pleased with their country's new self-assertiveness, an increasingly articulate minority is dismayed at the narrowness of focus and obvious self-indulgence. And Meinecke's problem has resurfaced. Some nationalists appear to believe that the state is capable of legislating a national culture into existence. The more sensible ones have their doubts.

The issues are complex. It is not easy to take a position for or against. It is alone more difficult than ever to explain to outsiders what is happening in Canada. Not so long ago there was no problem. A reader anywhere could pick up Northrop Frye's *The Educated Imagination* and be reassured that, from time to time, sophisticated interpretations of literature originated in Canada. This study boasts no beavers or maple leaves; it achieves its considerable impact through a timeless and placeless internationalism. It is, so to speak, the literary equivalent of Canadian foreign policy in the 1950s. But what would the same reader think if he chanced upon Margaret Atwood's *Survival*, a thematic guide to Canadian literature prepared for the schools? This is nationalism with a vengeance. Miss Atwood's thesis is that "every country has a single unifying and informing symbol at its core". Canada's is survival. In any other Western country such a notion would be dismissed as a figment of the undergraduate imagination. But in Canada it expresses an important partial truth which, *mutatis mutandis*, applies equally to French and to English. It is also as true of economic affairs as of culture.

In planning, Canada has never overcome two hangovers of colonialism, the clinging to resources as the chief generator of wealth and the resort to tariffs and other forms of protection in place of real competition. In literature, there were no renewable resources to build upon. So they were invented. The result was the Can lit industry. Literature occupied the place of other staples; its themes, until recently, were limited to Canadian flora and fauna. Canada was not considered a suitable place to look for the whole range of human experience. Like timber, nickel and the caribou, literature was a territorial resource.

But survival is only half the problem. The other half, which Miss Atwood does not touch upon, has to do with the ideological and intentional function of literature. In Canada, literary activity did not produce something distinctively national; rather, a national instinct for self-preservation gave rise to a large body of writing. Can it claim, then, to have brought about a historic adaption of the wider themes of Western literature to the Canadian experience? Has it not, in obedience to the laws of demand, only elevated to the status of a national ideal what was in fact a phase of growth? Here, comparison with painting is instructive, since the Group of Seven very early deforested a region of national sensibility. Later artists have had to work out their own relationship to an indigenous tradition. Jack Bush, Canada's leading abstractionist, describes his own transition from conventional works like "Fall Day—Caledon" (1938), through "Break Through" (1959), to fully international paintings like "V-Cut" (1967) and "Bond" (1971):

> All we knew really was what was going on in Canada; it was very nationalistic indeed. The Group of Seven, of course, were the top boys and anybody else who was adventurous at all just oohed and aahed at them and what they did. And I still can't get over the habit we got into—all those painters would go out into the field and do field sketches on Saturday and Sunday; they had, just like A. Y. Jackson had, a little painting kit . . .

The stimulus of a wider audience transformed Bush from a conservative landscape artist into a radical abstractionist:

> [In] 1968, my painting began to sell, first in New York, then in London, and then in Canada, which is the usual habit. . . . [Even before], some of us began to break off [from the Group of Seven], being influenced by Picasso and Matisse and some of the abstract art we started to see. We started to wonder, my God! When did this start to happen?

In literature, by and large, it has not happened. At the International Poetry Festival held in Toronto in October 1975 some good Canadian poetry was read, including that of Miss Atwood, who has a large following in both Canada and the United States. But most of it had about the same effect on figures like Thom Gunn as the Ontario wine so thoughtfully provided by the government for the occasion: one taste was enough.

Too much of the debate on nationalism has been carried on by spokesmen for literature. The limitations of Miss Atwood's thesis are apparent if one sets it beside a classic of sociology like *The Vertical Mosaic*, a historical study like Michael Katz's *The People of Hamilton, Canada West*, or the explorations of modes of thought and feeling in John O'Neill or Marshall McLuhan. One may also question whether literary criticism represents the best in Canadian thinking. There is possibly greater vitality in the tradition of economic history that runs from the late Harold Innis to the present doyen of village studies in North America, Ambrose Raftis. Although survival may be an important issue, it is not acceptable as a unitary criterion of either the imaginative life or society. In both areas the realities defy such radical simplifications. Nor is it a programme for positive action. The *Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies* of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada unequivocally stated: "Patriotic appeals to preserve and develop Canadian identity do not constitute, in practice or in principle, an adequate rationale for Canadian studies at any level of education." But Canadians have always had a genetic weakness for big, authoritative ideas. Under their weight healthy diversity can easily be crushed. In former times they longed for the great Canadian novel. Nowadays they want a single, fixed identity.

There is, to be sure, a Canadian identity, as many unsuspecting visitors from south of the border have discovered. But it is understated and largely unarticulated. It is like the history of one's family: all the members know what it is about and so no one bothers to write it down. Anyone who wished to ferret it out would need the tools of an anthropological fieldworker. Literature provides only partial clues and the literary point of view only one dimension in a wide spectrum of possibilities. The chief error literary critics have made is to evaluate poetry, novels, paintings and music according to the degree of their Canadianness. The place occupied by the various arts in everyday life and the degree to which production, as opposed to blind consumption, takes place in Canada have less often been the focus of analysis. The motivation may be sincere. But everywhere one sees the compromising of standards that troubles many small countries — mutual back-scratching by writers and reviewers, the promotional complicity of newspapers, radio and television, and the manipulation of the arts councils in favour of nationalistic projects of questionable larger value. As a result, the internal standards for judging Canadian works of literature and art are not widely respected outside the country. Some authors prefer not to be reviewed in Canada. Many others have had to survive international competition before winning even grudging recognition at home. American publishing, universities and literary circles have more than their fair share of Canadians who have never bothered to come back.

Nationalism then, despite its benign intentions, has given rise to all the predictable abnormalities. It has given weaklings a flag to hide behind. It has offered up an obvious victim to the scapegoat theory of history. It has acted as a cover for personal gain at the expense of the public good. It has erected false boundaries and enforced false sanctions. It has legitimized mediocrity and admitted a double standard for culture. It has placed an ideological veil in front of many of Canada's real problems—its economic planning, regional disparities and endemic political instability. In many ways it has made the country smaller, not larger.

Yet, despite its many failings, the national movement has one overriding virtue: it is the only universalizing force in the country. Without it, Canada would probably undergo psychological disintegration. All the positive accomplishments of the past generation would be dissolved by particularism.

For, as matters presently stand, the vital institutions that affect cultural activity nearly all operate on the regional or local level. There are many examples: No Canadian university recruits on a national basis, as do Harvard and Yale or Oxford and Cambridge. Education is a provincial responsibility, as a recent OECD report noted, and Canada has shown little interest in developing national goals. There is no Library of Congress or British Library. The National Library in Ottawa, both by the nature of its collection and its location, is less use to scholars than the Robarts Research Library in Toronto.

Anyone living outside the Ottawa region needs a personal jet to profit from the National Arts Centre. The National Gallery is only now acquiring permanent headquarters. Canada has no equivalent of *The Times* or *Le Monde*. National and municipal issues dominate *The Globe and Mail* and *Le Devoir*; international events are merely fed in by the wire service. There is no truly national political magazine, although several try to play that role. Nor is there a widely read review of literature or the visual and performing arts. Canada has no national academy that acts as a forum for the learned disciplines. The Royal Society is just a large, unwieldy club, and the Humanities Research Council has virtually no money, no permanent meeting-place for its members and, until recently, had no full-time director. There is no national symphony. The National Ballet is really a Toronto company. The CBC maintains a national network for radio and television but it has drastically reduced the budget for Canadian drama to the point where new performances are impossible. The Canada Council patronizes the humanities and social sciences everywhere, but its funds are distributed in bits and pieces. More than once it has bowed to regional political interests. The Governor General's Award for Literature exists, but one is never sure that all the relevant titles reach the judges.

The lack of a national focus is observable in other areas. Montreal and Toronto are not small versions of Paris and London; they are just provincial capitals. To date, the provinces of Canada have not even been able to agree on a formula for bringing home the British North America Act. In short, Canada is a cultural Switzerland, a mosaic of racial, legal and institutional checks and balances. Therefore, it is not surprising that Canadians' loyalties are often regional. A man from the Auvergne knows that he is both *français* and *auvergnat*. A Canadian from Newfoundland, Quebec, or Alberta, if he does not travel widely, will carry throughout his life the stamp of a deeply local patriotism. This state of affairs may be one of Canada's strengths. But it gives a special twist to the issue of nationalism. There is a wide gap between theory and practice. The nationalist sentiment requires universalistic institutions, but national experience is subdivided into regional clusters. Unless larger attachments develop, nationalism is in danger of becoming just another nationalized enterprise, an uncompetitive business propped up with government aid.

For the government's use: that is the knotty side of the question. Over the past decade, nationalism has slowly but surely infiltrated bureaucratic circles where it has gradually acquired the status of an official culture. Every country has some sort of official culture which is reserved at home for flag-waving ceremonies and exported like duty-free liquor to embassies abroad. In most countries it is not taken seriously. In Canada there is a possibility that it will be mistaken for the real article. The problem is not one of extremism, although Canada has its liberation movements and admirers of fascism. It is the danger that nationalism will be exploited by government to make up for the failure of its own policies. This is the case in science. As the bureaucracy, in supposed response to national need, has swelled, science itself, as creative research, has become progressively impoverished. In scientific and technological research and development

Canada is rapidly slipping into third-rate status. Part of the responsibility rests with the miscalculations of the nation's economic planners since the Second World War. Instead of guiding Canada towards self-sufficiency they created a state of ever-increasing dependency. But the major blame is the government's. Since 1970 at *least, successive budgets for medical* and other experimental work have been steadily reduced. The government has also resorted to taxing all research grants, thus taking money out of one pocket and putting it into another. *The false* austerities and feather-bedding have fooled no one. John Polanyi, a leading chemist at the University of Toronto, recently wrote:

> Our neglect of science is something that sets us clearly apart from countries with which we might reasonably compare ourselves. In the United States, in France, in Germany, even in beleaguered Britain, the support of basic science has roughly kept pace with inflation. Only in Canada has inflation been used, year after year, as a device for diminishing the nation's investment in this fundamental activity.

It is arguable that, in the short run, the humanities may flourish even while the sciences wither and die. But in the long run, in so highly industrialized a country, the two are closely linked. Despite the com*mitment of the government to an* overtly nationalistic pose, Canada is a long way from control of its natural resources, sound economic planning, or a mature science policy.

The humanities have fared better. The writing of Canadian history has never been at a higher level. Dance, drama and music are well supported across the country. Poetry is being overpublished. In general, Canada is a more articulate and self-confident nation than it was a generation ago, and a part of the credit is due to a determined nationalist movement. But the next stage may not be so easy. Nationalism, if it is not to become a set of hollow slogans, must be transformed from good intentions into a programme of action. As a first step, the air should be cleared. The lavishly subsidized and *patently unmarketable* Canadiana industry should be allowed to die a natural death. The muscular official culture should be buried quietly somewhere north of Great Slave Lake. Then some con*crete steps could be taken for* strengthening culture at the national level.

To my mind, anyone's list of priorities should include three items. One is the breaking down of artificial barriers between the provincial education systems, so that biculturalism can work, duplication of effort be eliminated and excellence surface at the national level. Canada has the talent for one, or perhaps two, graduate schools of international stature, not twenty. Equally important is the development of a flexible foreign policy for culture. The greatest threat to Canadian survival is not the lack *of a national identity but the ignor*ance of Canadian history and institutions in the United States. So retrograde has Canada been in this area that it often does not have mature cultural relations with the *countries that have provided its* most dynamic ethnic groups. For instance, despite a large Italian minority, there is no Canadian school among the eighty or so national academies in Rome. *Finally, to achieve greater self-suffi*ciency in culture, Canada must, through both public and private means, continue to give strong support for the arts, asking only that a fair proportion of the productive processes take place within its borders. This last is particularly important. Canadians have always had a tendency to view culture as a product rather than a process. Accordingly, they have sought to regulate it through content quotas. There is a lesson in the history of all great cultural centres that they have not learnt. One cannot, as Molnacks suggested, legislate culture into existence; one can only favour the conditions in which genuinely creative people can work.

On the streets

By L. J. Sharpe

GEORGE A. NADER:
Cities of Canada
Volume 2: Profiles of Fifteen Metropolitan Centres
460pp. Canada: Macmillan. $Can18.95.

Profiles of Fifteen Metropolitan Centres is the second of two volumes on the "Canadian urban system", that is to say, it is an account of the physical characteristics of most of the major cities in Canada. Comprehensiveness has been sacrificed in favour of geographical spread, and some of the larger cities in Ontario and Quebec have been omitted. Each of the *fifteen cities selected, from St* Johns in the extreme east to Victoria in the far west, receives its due ration of pages, and each city is dealt with in the same way: potted history first, then the city's economy and land-use patterns and finally a discussion of recent and current land-use planning policy.

George Nader must clearly be awarded an alpha for industry and anyone with a desire to know most *of the primary socio-economic facts* on the urban centres in Canada will be well served by his labours. Dr Nader supplements his text liberally with tables and even more liberally with maps, and he also includes a sprinkling of photographs.

Occasionally one of his facts kindles the imagination: Victoria's downtown street lamps—a tourist's delight evidently—are cast-offs from Walsall; Water Street in St Johns is the oldest thoroughfare in North America; during the period 1841 to 1859 Canada's capital switched between Toronto, Kingston, Montreal and Ottawa, by my calculations, something like eight times. Viewed as a whole, however, the book is very difficult to digest, and before we reach the halfway stage one city has merged with another. Which city was it that was founded by a French *voyageur*, had that disastrous fire in 1855, suffered a slump at the turn of the century and allowed the first tower office blocks to grace its skyline in the wake of the post-war boom in the early 1960s?

The question that hovers over the enterprise is what purpose does the book serve, other than as a reference work for undergraduate geography students? Even for trainee planners, it is doubtful, whether Dr Nader's thumbnail sketches will be of much help. No attempt is made to summarize the great mass of data, still less is there any synthesis. We must presume that these tasks were undertaken in Volume 1. If this is in fact the case, then this book is made up of what amounts to the working materials of another. Understandably no academic likes to squander his research data, but a 460-page book that is made up of largely background notes is difficult to justify.

Readers will have to do their own generalizing, and at the risk of repeating what Dr Nader may have already discussed in Volume 1, the major Canadian urban centres seem to share, to British eyes at least, three primary characteristics. Leaving aside the question *of defining the "true" city, the* first of these characteristics is their extraordinarily rapid growth in the twentieth century. Edmonton, for example, which now challenges Winnipeg for the mantle of "Queen of the Prairies", was a bigger than Oxford in 1946; so is Vancouver has almost double in size since 1940. The only big wards are Saint John and Winnipeg *both of which have actually lost* population since 1956.

The second common characteristic that emerges from Dr Nader's imperturbably descriptive pages is the crucial part played by the vagaries in the fortunes of almost all of his fifteen cities. In a very real sense most major Canadian urban centres were, and in some cases still are, railway towns. The last shared characteristic is the impact *of the United States. All of the* fifteen cities have at some time been affected, and usually very affected, by events occurring in, or emanating from, its southern neighbour. In this sense the story of Canadian cities is *very much the* story of Canada itself.

Private worlds

By Howard Brotz

DAVID R. HUGHES and EVELYN KALLEN:
The Anatomy of Racism: Canadian Dimensions
230pp. Books Canada. £4.85 (paperback, £2.60).

This book is a series of loosely connected segments of popularized physical anthropology, genetics, archaeology, history, and sociology. The observations about the *contemporary* scene are not based on coherent original research, but are drawn from secondary sources as the authors move, in their comments, from one group to another. In their discussion of the French, the existence of the Parti Québécois, which stands for a politically independent Quebec, is not mentioned. Although they do mention treaties in their discussion of Indians, the complications of these treaties for a native policy concerning peoples who are in between two conflicting ways of life, and have a secure footing in neither, are not explored. The fifth chapter, "The Peoples of Canada Today", does not contain even the simplest table of the racial/ethnic composition of the Canadian population.

The main thesis of this book, which is virtually tucked on as a conclusion of two pages, is that Canada is an "unjust" society because of the prevalence of "polite" racism. David R. Hughes and Evelyn Kallen give as an *example of "polite" racism the* case of a white Canadian *politely moving* away *slightly* (italics *added*) from a black passenger on the subway, which is not even an observation but a supposition. They do not give *any examples of "impolite" racism*, but one may suppose it means such things as gas-chambers, concentration camps, pogroms, lynchings, mass deportations, and the use of state-run propaganda machine to incite racial hatred. The absence of these "impolite" things in Canada in no way deters the authors from concluding that Canada, with its "deeply rooted" racism, is far from being a truly "just" society. This last term was made into a political slogan by the present Prime Minister when he took office. Its meaning is no clearer in this book than as used by politicians. The authors do not give one empirical example of what in their view is an ethically heterogeneous and just society. In fact it never occurs to them that one might be obliged to give and reflect upon such examples in order to have a rational standard of justice. Without such reflection "*racism*" becomes the basis of a moralistic absolute on the basis of which every existing society is equally "racist". The qualitative distinction between Canada, which notwithstanding its share of racial *frictions is one of the milder* societies in the world, and the Germany, the Soviet Union, or Uganda, disappears from view. As we know all too well, the cry of "racism" can become a rhetorical noise made by *the most flagrant* hypocrites.

What is interesting is not so much the motive, which is obvious enough, but the premise of this thoughtless moralism. The authors *unwittingly give it away: discussing* the relation of Jews and Italians to the private social world of the British elite they correctly note the economic and political success of the public sphere does not guarantee *commensurate social acceptance* in the private sphere. To their credit, they then point out that many of the members of these ethnic minorities have not the slightest desire to penetrate the private world, having private worlds of their own. And there they leave the subject which is really where they should have begun it.

That [illegible] inequalities based on [illegible] class, race or even [illegible] are not inconsequential for equality issues is a considerable handicap to major periodicals including Canada's most prestigious, the *Malahat Review*, is the end it says much about Canadian priorities: by your *banisiads ye shall be known*.

The Oxford atlas, however, is an atlas, and a highly informative one in which the cartographers and designers have made judicious, thoughtful and attractive use of colour and symbol keys that help the geographic and economic facts to leap off the page. They also help to remind us that, in North America, the natural lines of communication, and similarity, run north and south. As, therefore, inevitably, do the lines of the economic and cultural domination/dependence relationship.

Entering the lists

MARGOT J. FAWCETT (*Editor*):
The 1976 Corpus Almanac of Canada
The annual handbook of Canadian business, scientific, cultural and government affairs
975pp. Toronto: Corpus Publishers Services. $Can25.95.

Oxford Regional Economic Atlas: The United States and Canada
Second Edition
128pp. Oxford *University* Press. £8 (paperback, £3.75).

The Corpus Almanac seems oddly named, because as a reference book its designation ought surely to be that of a *directory*. The abundant data crowded into its pages appear mostly in the shape of lists—of, for example, universities, churches, banks, trade unions, associations and societies, MPs, government departments and officials, organized sports. There is even a list, by table, of the various "government incentives" that lubricate the bearings of Canadian commerce.

Besides all this there are informa*tional sections* with details of such matters as Canadian law, the taxation system, regional geography, and the past and present of the "native peoples", but never too the drawing up of lists and building of tables *dominates* the presentation.

All very commendable, and doubtless indispensable, but it does not make an almanac, not even by expending the first ten pages on a *chronology* of Canada in 1975. Neither is it made an almanac by including a section which nods at Old Moore by means of some astronomical details—these expand unduly the concept of a reference *book about Canada* when they include material on the nature of the universe, complete with snippets about quasars, black holes and other cosmological novelties.

Less all-inclusive than that section would suggest, but still sometimes sweeping, is the book's territory as marked out by the subtitle: "the annual handbook of Canadian business, scientific, cultural and government affairs". Cultural? Not so you would notice. Yes, a page or so mentions museums and galleries, but fails for once to provide a list: only a note of official bodies from which such lists can be obtained. Again, there is a directory-list of publishers and magazines, and within the latter such journals as *Hog Guide*, or *Snowmobile Trade*, necessarily earn a line or two. But the sub-section dealing with literary magazines reveals a staggering inadequacy when it ignores a considerable handful of major periodicals including Canada's most prestigious, the *Malahat Review*, is the end it says much about Canadian priorities: by your *banisiads ye shall be known*.

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Douglas Hill

Anglo-Saxon options

By Arthur Sheps

JOHN L. FINLAY:
Canada in the North Atlantic Triangle
Two Centuries of Social Change
343pp. Oxford University Press. £5.20.

Comparison is unavoidable in the writing of Canadian history. Like all ex-colonial societies, Canada cannot be understood in isolation from its parent countries. Moreover, the proximity and influence of the United States—part parent, part sibling—has been a complicating factor. Consequently, incidental comparison appears in most works of Canadian history. Some monographs have attempted specifically comparative studies of limited questions while a few short essays have suggested frameworks for general comparison of the United States, Canada and Great Britain. *Canada in the North Atlantic Triangle* is an ambitious extended essay about large trends in the three societies from the eve of the American Revolution until the recent past. The title notwithstanding, the book's subject is the varying response of political culture to social change, the process of social change itself. There are pitfalls and structural difficulties inherent in this undertaking and John Finlay does not avoid them all. Britain and the United States have richly explored histories which, even if only adumbrated, may overwhelm the discussion of the Canadian experience which they are supposed to enlighten. Too often in the earlier chapters Dr Finlay's "dichotomous analysis" (his term) of the United States and Britain leaves Canada looking like an afterthought. His enterprise requires the reader's *assent to accounts of the two larger* societies before turning to Canada. In fact, despite insights into differences in social styles, Dr Finlay is a better guide to British than to United States history: some American influences in Canada are therefore underestimated. This book is described as an introductory survey, a fact which may account for a certain brusqueness of style. But one wishes that the writing were less insistently fashionable and addicted to "with it" locutions.

Dr Finlay assumes that his readers will be innocent of systematic knowledge of the history and religion of Western civilization. So he begins with a discussion called "The Presuppositions of European Society". He considers the political and economic systems of pre-revolutionary Britain, France (as the mother country of Quebec) and their North American colonies; the values of the Enlightenment in science; culture and government; and the social implications of "a trinity of religious styles"—Catholic, Calvinist and sectarian. This intro*duction to a comparison of Britain* and her two American offspring is accomplished with skilful condensation. It is particularly good where its readers are probably weakest, that is in its sensitivity to religion. But Dr Finlay *credits* movements of ideas with a coherence and organization they rarely possessed and often portrays men as agents or embodiments of prevailing modes of thought.

One of these general theories partly accounts for the differences among the societies under consideration here. Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis explained the individualism, egalitarianism and democracy of the New World by reference to the physical conditions of life in newly settled territory, and so emancipated America from European history. In Canada another approach, developed by a number of historians, combined geographical factors with the economic and political underdevelopment of British North America and the consequent importance of central direction. The natural thrust of the St Lawrence River's waterway system into the thinly settled heart of the continent was necessarily managed from a metropolitan centre, first London, then Montreal and later Toronto. Social, cultural and political values were thus transmitted *to the hinterland. This account* offered an alternative to the frontier thesis which differentiated the experience of Canada from that of the United States. A third theory allows an even smaller place for environmental influence. According to Louis Hartz and his followers, most colonial settler societies develop from one aspect or fragment of the mother country. The new society, then, is more culturally and politically homogeneous; it has few or none of the complexities and internal challenges of the parent society.

The fragment theory, adapted to the special circumstances of Canada, informs Dr Finlay's essay. Thus New France was the almost ideal corporate and Catholic society which France's monarchs were unable to impose at home, but could achieve in their colony. Quebec continued to reflect this heritage long after the British conquest. Britain, in this *analysis, exhibits variety, coloration* and political choice while the United States, which spring from the liberal bourgeois elements of seventeenth and eighteenth-century England, displays political exclusivism. "*The very fabric of American* society was in harmony with the notions of Locke", and so there have been no serious or legitimate rivals to prevailing liberal orthodoxy. In both these cases an aspect of the parent culture became the whole of the American society. Modern Canada is more complex. Although an offspring of Europe, it combined a number of elements: the Lockean heritage of the United States, the conservative values of the French-Canadians and of the British administrative classes at home and in British North America, the views adopted by the Loyalist settlers who fled from revolutionary America, and the sentiments *imported by nineteenth-century* British immigrants.

During the revolutionary half-century after 1760 there were movements in favour of middle-class democracy in all three societies. These were followed by periods of temporary reaction. Dr Finlay overstates both the middle-class consensus of the English colonies and the conservatism of the Constitution and the early republic. But his main point here is that the democratic impulse was more immediately effective in the new United States than in Britain. Yet American republican democracy was the suspicious of conspiracy (with more reason in the revolutionary era than Dr Finlay allows), intolerant of authority (which British reformers would utilize) and simultaneously utopian and attached to a nostalgic arcadianism which was and is present in all reform movements in the United States.

In what remained of British North America after the American Revolution democratic developments were stunted. The imperial authorities determined to remedy the absence of aristocratic influence from which the former colonies had suffered. A small population and economic underdevelopment as well as the deference of the French-Canadians following the Conquest, all helped check liberalism. Dr Finlay notices recent historical revisions but he concludes that "it still remains true that French-Canadian society was passive in tone". British North America, then, followed the imperial pattern, not that of the United States, in the early nineteenth century.

What role did the Loyalist migration play in the emerging pattern? Traditionally the Loyalists are supposed to have brought their Tory principles with them. But Dr Finlay argues that the Loyalists became Tories after their migration, responding to the conservative climate of British North America rather than creating it. They imagined a Tory past and became zealots of a Tory present. The mass of Loyalists, according to Dr Finlay, originally "differed in no way from the Americans they left behind". Dr Finlay *realized that the reader may be* wondering why it was necessary to deny that the Loyalists brought their Toryism with them, and to insist that it was developed in their Canadian exile". His explanation is a remarkable instance of fidelity to a thesis. He points out: "To say that the Loyalists took their ideology with them is to suggest that the Americans expelled that ideology. . . ; But the argument presented here is that the Americans, far from expelling Toryism, did not have any." In other words, the theories of Professor Hartz about American liberal consensus require us to deny that the Loyalists, even were American Tories!

In the course of industrialization, British North America fell between the British and United States models. Like the United States, it had a domestic hinterland which fostered a staple trade economy, politically homogeneous; it has few or none of the complexities and internal challenges of the parent society.

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pluralism while the United States manifested a "tendency towards ideological totalitarianism" which reveals itself in the recurrent appearance of nativism and the fear of subversive conspiracies. But Fenian repression, the Chartist agitations, or the difficulties of Labour's entry into politics do not suggest that greater commitment to an ideologically differentiated party system on which Dr Finlay lays such stress.

Nor is it easy to believe that Liberals *and Conservatives* in 1860 represented a wider political choice than the Democrats and Republicans on the eve of the Civil War. Dr Finlay also contrasts toleration of French Canada with the rejection of *the South. But the South did not* merely represent alternative political values. As Lincoln made clear, it was a danger to the foundation and fabric of civilized society. The spread of slavery, not George Fitzhugh's neo-feudalism, was resisted. It is true that many American reformers hoped for conformity to a supposed Anglo-Saxon norm of political purity and were suspicious of immigrants. But these attitudes were matched by many British liberals in domestic policy, in regard to the Empire, and in their reactions to the United States. At the same time, ethnic differences and cultural pluralism have been more persistent in the United States than Dr Finlay recognizes. Nor have these differences been as great a barrier to political or economic advancement as in Canada.

Since the late nineteenth century, war, technology, and economic *depressions have led to attacks* against liberal capitalism. In the United States, these attacks were themselves often nostalgic calls for a return to liberal values. In Britain and Canada the challenges have been more varied. There were pressures from the right, but Dr Finlay finds those from the left the more telling. In the United States the socialist movement was violently rejected and has never established itself. Canadians followed the British pattern and absorbed a pragmatic socialist movement into the mainstream of political life. (Again, French Canada is the exception, but it was not a bulwark of liberalism either.) The authority of United States based labour unions in English-speaking Canada retarded the workers' commitment to socialism but the influence of British immigration and example prevailed.

Now, it is true, as Dr Finlay points out, that the public acceptance and moderate political success of a socialist movement constitutes an important difference between Canadian and American responses to social change, but one should not *exaggerate the significance* of this achievement. Historians such as W. M. Dick have recently shown that American labour in the Gompers era had more interest in the socialists than Dr Finlay seems to think. In neither *Britain nor* Canada was working-class socialism accepted without violence. Canadian workers appear to have rejected the thorough approach to socialism which remains a political option in Britain and they are closer to the Americans than to the British in their social attitudes. The presence of parties describing themselves as socialist may mark off Canada's political culture from that of the United States, but it has not altered *greatly the shape of daily life. A* comparative examination of political culture is valuable but it cannot alone answer the question about the Canadian identity which is the real subject-matter of Canadian historical writing.

"It is no exaggeration to call Hamilton an instant city. In the years between the time it officially became a city in 1846, when it housed only a few thousand people, and the end of that decade, its population increased 150 per cent." Thus Michael B. Katz in his analysis and reconstruction of the social structure of a typical North American "commercial" city of the mid-nineteenth century, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West* (381pp. Harvard University Press. £10.50). Professor Katz explores in close detail family, class and ethnic relationships within Hamilton, drawing on the records of the whole population found in the city census, on city directories, assessment rolls, newspapers and other sources. This work is an addition to the series Harvard Studies in Urban History.

Escape route

By Stephen Clark

ROBERTSON DAVIES :
World of Wonders
358pp. New York : Viking Press. $8.95.

Robertson Davies was known first as the creator of Samuel Marchbanks, acerbic critic of Canadian provincial life. Since then he has learnt to incorporate his faintly provincial anti-provincialism, and his theatrical experience, into novels that should interest many who know nothing of Canada. He writes plainly, with little effort to evoke the emotions he recounts : the story, as seen through its actor's eyes, speaks for itself. And despite some cavils, does so very well.

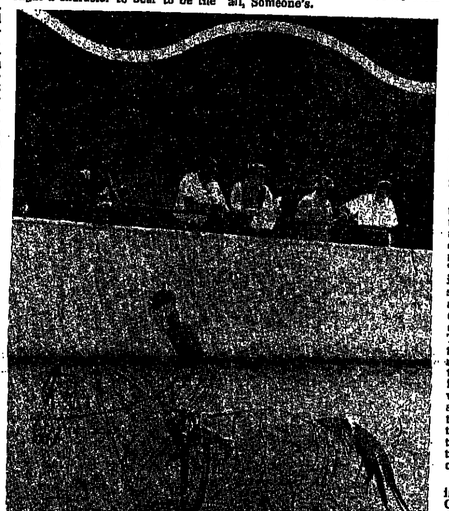
World of Wonders completes the Deptford trilogy, begun in *Fifth Business* (1970) and *The Manticore* (1972). Those earlier books were the feigned autobiographies of Dunstan Ramsey, hagiographer and confidant, and of David Staunton, barrister and rebellious son. The third volume is the tale, relayed by Ramsey, of Magnus Eisengrim, magician. Ramsey had sought to justify himself against an ignorant assumption that he was a doddering schoolmaster ; David Staunton underwent Jungian analysis to discover himself upon his father's death. Eisengrim has no need of self-justification or of self-discovery : he chooses to explain himself as a counterpoint to his starring role in a film tribute to Houdini, partly from confessional pride and partly to avenge a friend. He does not theorize about, but lives what Mr Davies (some way after Spengler) calls the Magian world : no Faustian magician, but an enchanter.

Eisengrim's infancy was as Paul Dempster, prematurely born to Ramsey's "fool-saint" and scorned by the provincial bullies of Deptford for his mad mother. At the age of nine he was abducted, from one hell to a worse, by a tenth-rate carnival. Sodomized, bullied, used as the internal mechanism of Abdullah, the Card-playing Automaton, he yet survived to supervise the lingering death of his chief tormentor. After that, to England, where he doubled for a romantic actor of a presently unfashionable sort when there was need for a juggler or rope-walker in the play. Acquiring skills and polish all the way, he next became a clock restorer, and finally was selected to repair, which he did with exquisite skill, a collection of antique mechanical toys. Here he encountered his final patron, familiar from the earlier works as Liesl Vitzlipützli, and so became what it was in him to be, the greatest illusionist in the world, without illusions, offering romance and magic to light up dull lives.

World of Wonders is a provoking book. It is a mark of Mr Davies's skill that the life of Dempster-Eisengrim, however episodic in epitome, does attain a heroic wholeness in recitation. The style "marvels", of the carnival; the boring mechanical toys, are transmuted by Eisengrim's stubborn ability into reminders of that world of wonders which Ramsey too had pursued via hagiographers. Eisengrim is a survivor, who has borne with a peculiarly horrible early life and found strength to play his part with dignity and humour. Other perspectives open upon his world: Ramsey's, Liesl's, the film-producer's, and egregious administrator's. Eisengrim himself had given, in *Fifth Business*, other interpretations of his actions. The whole trilogy should be read for Mr Davies's vision, though *World of Wonders* is readable by itself.

In reading the complete trilogy, it is the figure of Boy Staunton that least satisfies. Wealthy superpatriot, bully, womanizer, inept politician, he seems too slight and tedious a character to warrant the concern felt by Ramsey and David Staunton over the question "who killed Boy Staunton ?". That question is now answered more clearly than before, and in the answer Mr Davies perhaps reveals the role of that unfortunate. He is indeed too slight a character to bear to be the creature he had helped to make himself : he cannot bear to be an icon in other's dreams, cannot bear to play the part set for him in the world's play. In denying his ancestry, his past misdeeds, his Shadow, in seeking always to cut up those who might have been his friends, he fails to find the strength to continue. He fails to distinguish and reconcile, as Eisengrim has done, the part and the player, fails to remember that we are all bit-players in each other's melodramas. The central weakness of the trilogy —to put it crudely, that such provincialisms cannot be of interest to Us—becomes its central and most barbed success.

In brief : *World of Wonders* is well written, entertaining, absorbing even in its longueurs. Robertson Davies deserves to be better known in the Europe for which his characters yearn. Professional critics can hunt for symbols to their brief content : even the unprofessional can relish his wonders and maybe profit from the underlying theme, that the world is not our idea but is, after all, Someone's.



Spectators at Woodbine Racetrack, Toronto (claimed to be the largest one of the 124 photographs (12 in colour) in John de Visser's record of life in the city, Toronto (112pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback, £4.95). William Toye contributes an introduction and notes on the plates.

Among the backwoodsmen

By Alasdair Maclean

W. D. VALGARDSON :
God is not a Fish Inspector
133pp. Oberon/Dobson. £3.50 (paperback, £1.75).

DAVID HELWIG and JOAN HARCOURT (Editors) :
75 : New Canadian Stories
206pp. Oberon/Dobson. £4.25 (paperback, £1.95).

W. D. Valgardson's stories are set in backwoods Manitoba, in a region of small-scale commercial fishing and subsistence farming, with little trapping and logging thrown in. It is a hard land, baked in summer and frozen in winter, where civilization is likely to be represented by a filling station and a general store, and entertainment to be no more ambitious than circumventing Canada's absurd liquor laws. The stories that emerge from it are as limited and obsessively repetitive as the land and its living might suggest. In most of them detail accumulates round a core of violence and builds to a bloody resolution. No one escapes the lash; no one is allowed to.

Mr Valgardson has a considerable reputation in Canada, and it cannot be denied that he generates a good deal of power and that his stories have a gripping, morbid, painful intensity. He is also very skilful in his use of imagery. The cover of his book compares him with Hardy and the Russian novelists ; he reminded me strongly of the Orcadian writer George Mackay Brown and I have the same major reservation about his work. Put simply, it is that Mr Valgardson manipulates his characters ruthlessly and very much to their moral disadvantage (though I think that he does so out of a limiting notion of the short story rather than, as with George Mackay Brown, out of a dislike of the twentieth century and its works). Mr Valgardson's are ignorant people living hopeless lives in an unrelentingly hostile environment ; they consistently betray and maltreat one another, both physically and mentally. The point I wish to make is that they are circumscribed in this fashion less because realism requires it than by the will and order of their creator and because his mind happens to run that way. What results is not tragedy, for all the bloodshed, but vicious humiliation.

God is not a Fish Inspector has coherence, perhaps too much. The editors of *New Canadian Stories* have plumped for a very mixed anthology, quite legitimately but with unfortunate results. There is a wild melange of styles here—orthodox, avant-garde, epistolary. As too often in the world of the short story the traditionalists have all the best tunes. The most enjoyable are "The Lady and the Travelling Salesman" and "Summer" ; both are fairly straightforward, but the former is perhaps too obviously inspired by American television comedies, and the latter, a pleasant evocation of girlhood, suffers from having been done too often by too many masters. David Helwig speaks in his introduction of the parlous state of the arts in Canada : it seems not to have changed very much since I left there fifteen years ago.

The big broadcast

By Norman Levine

CLARK BLAISE :
A North American Education
230pp. PaperJacks. $Can1.75.

Tribal Justice
224pp. PaperJacks. $Can1.95.

On a recent visit to Canada (Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto), I met some of the younger writers, half of them were writing short stories and of those that I read I found Clark Blaise the most interesting. He has published two collections, *A North American Education* came out in 1973, *Tribal Justice* in 1971.

He was born in Quebec of French Canadian father (who at twelve years in a monastery) and an English mother from Saskatchewan. When he was still a child—an only child—his family moved them down to Florida in order to try to improve their circumstances. There followed a series of moves, to different places in the United States, mainly because of domestic and business disasters. Blaise looks at his American upbringing knowing that he is French Canadian from Quebec. And when he makes use of his Canadian material it is with the detachment of having lived so much of his life as an American.

He calls his pieces "short fiction"—an accurate description. For they are not short stories in the accepted sense. What he is able to do is to trap pockets of shared messy life. In the novella-length "The March", in *Tribal Justice*, it is not the opening and the final sections (about American university students who end up marching on Washington for a civil rights demonstration) that are important. They are there to shape the direction of the story. But it is the middle—the bridge section—where the narrator goes to Quebec City for a short while and gets involved with some young French Canadian separatists, ending with a picnic on the Laurentians—that is unforgettable. Several of his pieces work in the same way. And perhaps part of the reason is the peculiar position of the short story in Canada.

Unlike in Britain, the short story in Canada is thriving. (There is one Canadian publishing house, the Oberon Press in Ottawa, which publishes each season more collections of short stories than novels.) And the reason for this recent activity is that Canada never had the usual outlet for the short story—the magazines. Instead, it had radio. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation began, in the autumn of 1954, a radio series called *Anthology*. And since then nearly every week, a new short story has been aired. *Anthology*, through its editor Robert Weaver, has encouraged writers without imposing any of the conditions about plot or content so often required by editors of magazines. The result has been a growing number of young short-story writers whose main concern is to show what it is like to be alive at a certain time in a certain place, without making a "story" about it. Against this background, the form taken by Clark Blaise's "short fiction" can be better understood.

Of this collection, *A North American Education*, the most unusual, [illegible] (a university lecturer in Montreal) looks backwards to his childhood in Florida—stopping briefly, in between, on a trip to Europe. The final section, four stories about his growing up in the South, is the most sympathetic character in the portrayal of his father. For Blaise has a sympathetic eye and ear for those that society rejects, whether it is the Southern poor or the European immigrants in the seedier sections of Montreal. Sometimes his less interesting, less convincing, whenever he tries to write a piece as a short story in the more usual form, as in "The Seizure". And now and then, in the way he uses language, and in his preambles, the academic in his overrides the natural writer. But these are small quibbles. He is easily the most exciting Canadian writer I have read in years.

Voices from a prairie town

By David Blewett

CLARA THOMAS :
The Manawaka World of Margaret Laurence
212pp. McClelland and Stewart (Books Canada). $Can10.

Margaret Laurence has emerged in the past few years as a major Canadian writer who deserves to be widely known outside, as well as within, her own country. In four novels and a collection of interlinked stories she has created the fictional world of Manawaka through which she has distilled her vision of human struggle, isolation, endurance, and ultimate victory. Manawaka is the authentic sounding name of a prairie town (based on Neepawa, Manitoba, where Margaret Laurence was born and grew up); the birthplace of all her main characters; the setting for a considerable portion of the novels, particularly *The Stone Angel*, *A Jest of God*, and the stories; and the imaginative centre of the five books that make up what is really a single epic work. It is epic in the sense that it possesses largeness of scale (both in place and time), themes of heroic endurance and spiritual odyssey, and a conception of national mythology. Margaret Laurence is the authentic voice in fiction of Western Canada, especially of its prairie towns, those little prisons of the spirit from whose inhibiting confines the town's young people strive to get away, but to which, if only in imagination, they are forever returning. Her novels are not merely set in Canada ; as in Faulkner or Joyce, the intensely local settings are integral to her meaning and characters. As each of the protagonists struggles to grasp the meaning of her own past she reflects at the personal level the country which for so long has sought a national identity.

Margaret Laurence is fortunate that the first full-length study of her novels is Clara Thomas's sympathetic and intelligent guide. The opening chapters describe Margaret Laurence's background and education in Canada and her young married life in Africa, and trace the evolution in her writings, particularly in the African stories, of her major themes and narrative techniques. Then in separate explorations of each of the Manawaka novels and the book of stories, she helps us to understand more fully the ways in which Margaret Laurence's narrative control skilfully conveys her vision of the human lot.

Central to Margaret Laurence's achievement is her sure and ultimately brilliant manipulation of the voices of her narrators as they grow, with pain and difficulty, into self-knowledge. In *The Stone Angel* we hear the voice of Hagar Shipley, aged ninety, demanding, proud, and "rampant with memory" as she relives her past, in the final few weeks of her life into which the process of her illumination is crushed. Gradually, through the interplay of past and present, we come to understand her story as she gropes toward the tragic recognition that the enormity of her pride has alienated her from those she loves and has ruined her life. But the winning of self-knowledge enables her to make some restitution and brings her at last a measure of peace. Rachel Cameron, whose sad, slightly hysterical voice records her story, is the victim of what Margaret Laurence calls (and the phrase gives the novel its title) "a jest of God". Solitary, in need of love, and suffering from excessive humility, the unmarried schoolteacher believes she has become pregnant as a result of a brief, unexpected affair. Her ordeal, and the conflict of fear and hope, ends when her "pregnancy" turns out to be a benign tumour, but her encounter with life liberates her into a new decisiveness and self-awareness.

In *The Fire-Dwellers* Stacey MacAindra's voice, puzzled, loquacious, and maternal reveals an ordinary but frightened woman. She lives a nightmare existence in the modern city of intolerable noise, vague fear, and sudden death that suggests the final, universal conflagration. Even more than in the previous novels, story and voice are inseparable. We are drawn on to her acceptance of a trapped existence, but persuaded that the final note of muted optimism, which acknowledges the victory of sheer endurance, is genuine. In *The Diviners*, Margaret Laurence's most ambitious and successful work, she turns (as she had earlier in her book of short stories, *A Bird in the House*) to the story of a woman much more like herself. Morag Gunn is a novelist, educated, sensitive, and far from ordinary. Appropriately, the point of view of this novel is more complex; first and third person alternate, furnishing us both with interior monologue and a rolling glimpse of the narrator as she sees herself as writer and as woman. Morag's journey into her own past in order to understand the present, which her struggle to become a writer demands, becomes a spiritual pilgrimage that we recognize as the central and culminating motif of the Manawaka cycle. The search for the true self is a theme of all major fiction; by undertaking it Morag, like Margaret Laurence, asserts the supreme importance of the creation of imaginative literature for the life and self-respect of a nation.

In all of Margaret Laurence's novels and stories the relationship of past and present, of the youth and maturity of an individual, of one generation to another compels attention to the problem of time. One of the strengths of Dr Thomas's study is her elucidation of Margaret Laurence's handling of multiple periods of time to convey the effect of memory, of growth in sensibility, of the ebbing of affection, and of the diverging of generations. Her devices range from the flashback technique and juxtaposing of scenes in *The Stone Angel* to the elaborate cinematic techniques of *The Diviners*. As in her analyses of symbolism, the influence of the Bible, or the epic conventions of *The Diviners*, Dr Thomas helps us to see the ways in which technique is integral to meaning.

Margaret Laurence has always been a highly literary writer, well able to articulate both her themes and her aims as a writer, and Dr Thomas makes good use of Margaret Laurence's published talks and interviews on the craft of fiction. In her last chapter she quotes this passage from Margaret Laurence's study of Nigerian novelists and dramatists (entitled *Long Drums and Cannons*), rightly pointing out that it applies equally to Margaret Laurence's own work:

> Despite some current fashions to the contrary, the main concern of a writer remains that of somehow creating the individual on the printed page, of catching the tones and accents of human speech, of setting down the conflicts of people who are as real to him as himself. If he does this well, and as truthfully as he can, his writing may sometimes reach out beyond any national boundary.

A break in the siege

By Douglas Hill

FRANK DAVEY :
From There to Here
A Guide to English-Canadian Literature since 1960
288pp. Porcepic Press (Books Canada). £8.03.

ROBERT D. CHAMBERS :
Sinclair Ross and Ernest Buckler
Studies in Canadian Literature
109pp. Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press (Books Canada). $Can 2.35.

Frank Davey's title for his guide to English-Canadian writing since 1960 skies exaggeratedly away from hyperbole or drumbeating. He might as readily have borrowed the title of a collection by the Canadian poet Raymond Souster: *So Far, So Good*. Wry, deprecatory, with a hint of underdog defiance—we may see something essentially Canadian in this stance.

What has happened in modern Canadian literature ? We have got "from there to here". But that is no small thing, if an abundance of vigorous, dedicated and talented literary artists can serve to confer largeness. The nascence of a modern Canadian tradition in the past fifteen years has been nothing short of phenomenal, all the more so when we consider the problems of communication and distribution, and the regional rivalries, across that geographical vastness.

Behind his critic-disarming title, Mr Davey is concerned in his introduction with the beginning of the phenomenon, and in the body of the book—a critical commentary on each of sixty writers—with its nature and prospects. In both, the ineluctable problem facing Canadian culture stands forth : when does the healthy, positive nationalism of a small (in population) country, struggling to find and preserve its individuality, become transformed into a negative, protectionist chauvinism creating big frogs in small backwoods pools ?

That the individuality needs struggle for its preservation is, sadly, axiomatic. America looms, messaging Canadians with its media (Mr Davey's two compact pages on Marshall McLuhan are instructive). In response, Canada's *literati* take up arms.

Exploiting the micro-technology, which makes alternatives to branch-plant culture possible, these people have founded a new recording industry, a film industry, and new publishing ventures . . . all of which have overtly or covertly worked to give greater definition and voice to the nation and to resist the invasion of Canada by monolithic U.S. corporations and values.

So far, as it were, so good. The Canada Council rushes to their aid which its multi-millions. Major Canadian writers—McLuhan, Pierre Berton, Farley Mowat, Leonard Cohen—pluck rich fruits of success in their own land, where once they might have had to follow Mordecai Richler into expatriation if they wanted more than paint-runs of 2,000 copies and a Governor General's Medal. Even Richler himself has some fame, to ride the crest of this new wave.

Yet America looms still, not to mention the immensity of the classic British literary tradition with which young Canadian writers are burdened in their Eng Lit courses. So "Canadian culture remains in a state of siege". And the response remains largely one of hoisting the drawbridge. Within the castle keep the air grows a little stale, the food a little unvaried; the relationships a little incestuous.

Yet I believe—and so, I think, does Mr Davey—that it need not always be so, may over the past decade have begun to cease being so. There are writers in Canada and in this book whose talents and achievements stand out in any company, even though they are not gurus like McLuhan, pop stars like Cohen, elder statesmen like Earle Birney or Northrop Frye.

These Canadians have found that the leagues outside their shores are not necessarily bigger but merely different—and if their international reputations have been slow a-building it is not necessarily because of the inferiority of the product but because other nations, despite a commonality of language, have their own cultural chauvinisms and insularities.

So the barriers erode. The poems of Miriam Waddington are published in Britain to critical acclaim, as are the novels of Margaret Laurence (both omitted by Mr Davey but appearing in an earlier companion volume). The unique voices of Irving Layton and Al Purdy are heard nearly as often in American poetry magazines as in Canadian. Even younger writers begin to put on international weight—the poet John Newlove, the short-story writer Dave Godfrey, the poet and critic Margaret Atwood. (Of her career, Mr Davey notes that one of her books achieved "such renown as to be republished in the U.S."—what a wealth of irony in that "renown"!)

Mr Davey's concise, illuminating appreciations of his sixty subjects ought to send readers to one of the many available anthologies, for samples. And they will be surprised. Not, of course, by everyone : Mr Davey rightly says that acceptance has come most quickly in Canada to those "whose work is most similar to traditional forms" ; he also rightly comments on the pervasive influence of major Americans like Charles Olson (and, he might have added, the more pernicious one of Gary Snyder).

Yet at the same time he locates and neatly sums up a quality and approach that entirely set several younger Canadians aside from many American and most British poets. They "present "the unprocessed, pre-reflective phenomena of perception" rather than "the thoroughly digested and cerebral meditations" of their more traditionally "modernist" contemporaries.

Now it may be that such an approach produces, in writers of insufficient talent, an over-colloquial flaccidity and formlessness that is not even "prosy" but "talky". Yet it has also produced a quantity of excellent poetry. . .

Thus girded, that besieged Canadian culture can make more and more forays outside the castle walls—as it must, if it is to escape becoming both ingrown and ossified. Towards that end books like Robert Chambers's serve only peripheral purposes. Within the Studies in Canadian Literature series, he considers two pleasantly competent writers about Canadian rurality—Sinclair Ross from the prairie west and Ernest Buckler from the maritime east. Their fictions are dissected and appreciated with earnestly perceptive straightforwardness, aimed at students in the proliferating university courses on Canadian literature. There remains, though, the danger of undue inflation of reputation, one of the most distressing by-products of literary chauvinism (and of some of Mr Davey's inclusions, too).

I acknowledge the justice in the cultural nationalists' stance, and to a large extent share their stance myself. But I still perhaps naively dream of a day when Canadian readers will read, and students study, and editors publish, and critics assess particular writers because they are particularly good, not merely because they wear the "home-grown" label.

Obscuring the poet

By Chaim Raphael

GRETL K. FISCHER :
In Search of Jerusalem
Religion and Ethics in the Writings of A. M. Klein
256pp. Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press (Books Canada). $Can14.

Abraham Klein was a much-respected Canadian poet who wrote mainly in the 1930s and 1940s, one of the young Canadians who were breaking out of an old-fashioned mould to speak (often in T. S. Eliot style) of the individual dilemmas of the urban man. Klein attracted attention particularly because his ideas and imagery flowed with great naturalness from a distinctive cultural background—the orthodox Jewish tradition in which he was nurtured whose idiom, he found, could be put to use in his poems (mostly published in "little magazines") were collected in a series of volumes in the 1940s, and in 1951 he published an allegorical novel, *The Second Scroll*, on a modern "Wandering Jew" theme. He was forty-two at this point : but soon after his spirit seemed to dry up. For the last eighteen years of his life, until his death in 1972, at the age of sixty-three, he slipped into a sad isolation, and was subject, we are told, to acute depression.

In Search of Jerusalem, which examines his religious ideas, is based on a doctoral thesis, and reflects this, alas, in providing the kind of meticulous examination of texts that in the end forgets perspective. Gretl K. Fischer carefully documents Klein's efforts, as revealed in his writing on Jewish subjects, to work out a coherent intellectual position bringing together the strands of his personal Jewish experience—his immersion as a child in Jewish love and learning, his discovery of Spinoza, his delight in the Hasidim, his forays into the Cabbalah, the horror of pogroms and the Nazis, the joy of Israel. We are shown the conflicts: Spinoza's pantheism had difficulty for him because it offended the notion of an independent Creator called for in the Jewish tradition: a bitter awareness of Jewish tragedy ran counter to the idea of a beneficent God, and was not easily transmuted by Hasidic joy or Zionist pride. We are given chapter and verse on all this from the poems and the novel ; but having been given a lecture on his subject-matter, we seem, on the way, to have lost the poet.

It is not just that the scholarly explanations of Klein's images are sometimes dull—as, for example, in a superb poem, the meaning of *Halizah* (an archaic Jewish ceremony in which a widow expresses contempt for a brother-in-law who won't marry her by taking off his shoe and spitting at him) which is described as "the rite of removing one's shoes before prayer, still of great importance to Moslems". The real flaw is that the analysis of a poet's thought only makes a book (as distinct from a PhD thesis) if there is weight or brightness in his ideas : and in Klein's case his Jewish "thought", richly expressed though it is in a variety of "Psalms" and other carefully devised forms, ends up not as a fully worked-out position but as sentiment — a familiar dilemma with many Jewish writers. This was not a failing in him as a poet; indeed the contrary. What made his poetry work was his ability to express the unanalysable amalgam of feelings to which he was subject as an individual in that time and in that place—a Jew (attached to but disliking orthodoxy), a man of the New World (yet with the usual Canadian ambivalence to the United States), a patriot (yet fully dependent on the English tradition), a Montrealer (fascinated by French Quebec yet alien to it). A poet deals in words: Klein responded this way, catching feelings on the run with images fresh or archaic but always true to the ambiguity of his own position.

The fact that he was obsessed by Jewish images never made him less a Canadian. To a greater extent even than in the United States, differences of origin in Canada persist in feeling, and the sense of Canadian nationality allows for this. Yet his Jewish obsession was in one sense a limitation. Jewish culture, to a person of Klein's particular background, is so intense a discipline that the images he drew from it with complete spontaneity would often carry only obscure overtones to less expert readers, a point made by Dr Fischer in explicating a line like: "The smiling Kahana: Shammai in a mope": and where no specific historical point is to be made, the set-pieces on the Jews can grow prosy, as in "Dance Chasidic":

> Beard pointed upward, eyes aflame
> like yahrzeit lamps,
> and right hand stretched as if it
> held God's left hand in it,
> Marching as into Paradise, while
> each foot stamps,
> Crushing Eternity into a dusty
> minute.

He is much better when the image flows unbidden from a less confined source, as in "Grain Elevator" :

> Up from the low-roofed warehouses
> It rises blind and babylonian . . .
> For here, as in a Josephdream, bow
> down
> The sheaves, the grains, the scruples
> of the sun
> Garnered from darkness : and
> Saskatchewan . . .

But he is at his most individual when the accident of being a Jew dropped out of Russia into the patriarchal, faith-ridden, intolerant but engrossing atmosphere of Quebec—a world not so far-off from *Der Heim*—is caught in a deliberate Jabberwocky of language, as in his famous poem "Montreal", "Chiefest, I", he says,

> Auditor of your music, cherish the
> Joined double-melodied vocabulaire,
> Where English vocable and roll
> Mollified by the parle of French,
> Billoguefact your air.

One is immediately in Montreal, with a Jew, leaving the Talmud for a moment, to look with fear and longing at his companions, the *goylin*.

Terrors and testimonials

By Christopher Levenson

HECTOR DE SAINT-DENYS-GARNEAU:
The Complete Poems
Translated by John Glassco
172pp. Ottawa: Oberon Press (Denis Dobson). £3.75.

JOAN McCULLAGH:
Alah Crawley and 'Contemporary Verse'
92pp. Vancouver: University of British Columbia. $11.

Except for the relatively rare case of the poet-translator, such as F. R. Scott or D. G. Jones, the poets of English Canada and French Canada are still hardly on speaking terms. There are all sorts of historical and political reasons for this, quite apart from the literary ones, but it is good to be able to welcome another major Quebec poet in English, even if for the anglophone reader, to whom much even of twentieth-century French poetry seems veiled in quasi-heraldic eloquence, the poetry of Hector de Saint-Denys-Garneau (1912-1943) may well not seem as accessible as that of the other major founding figure, Emile Nelligan (1879-1941), let alone that of Quebec's most distinguished living poet, Anne Hébert. For Saint-Denys-Garneau's poetry with its "ecstasy and anguish of the soul and of the intellect" is lyrical in a way that would have seemed old-fashioned in English even for the 1930s poets.

Whereas contemporary English poetry usually seems securely anchored in specific things, places and occasions, so that even where there is no explicit social content we are aware of a social context, Saint-Denys-Garneau's poetry has no such overtones but strikes one as ethereal, introverted and curiously disembodied. John Glassco's introduction sets out to provide enough of Saint-Denys-Garneau's personal and literary background to enable us at least to apply the appropriate criteria.

Those who know Mr. Glassco's excellent anthology, *The Poetry of French Canada in Translation* (1970), which together with the bilingual literary review *Étincelle* forms a major force in intra-Canadian literary understanding, will appreciate Saint-Denys-Garneau's historical importance for French Canadian literature, but an active appreciation of his purely poetic worth may prove more difficult. Of ancient aristocratic Quebec lineage, Saint-Denys-Garneau suffered a heart injury at the age of sixteen that led him to abandon his studies six years later and finally caused his early death in 1943. The only book of poems that he published in his own lifetime, *Regards et jeux dans l'espace* (1937) caused a nervous breakdown in horror at its own self-exposure. Two years later he withdrew to the family seigneurial manor where he composed the poems of *Les Solitudes*, but never published again.

He was constantly torn between the life of art and of religion, an ascetic who was "terrified both of the world and of hell", an artist who created his poetry out of the "terrible discrepancy between life and art" and the evanescent quality of both, "an unflinching, moral dichotomist in the strictest Catholic tradition". How does this appear in his work? Saint-Denys-Garneau is credited by his translator with "a search for new symbols and for modes of expression" for his recurrent theme of irremediable solitude and the feeling of being "ruined, abandoned, scorned". His main activement, we are told, was to embody his (symboliste) view of the visible world as a transparency to be conveyed by "signes" in terms of subtly controlled rhythms.

How this survives in translation is another matter. For all Mr. Glassco's skill, rhythm and verse movement remain notoriously difficult to render in another language. If we look at the poems that Mr Glassco singles out in his introduction as examples of Saint-Denys-Garneau's mastery of rhythm, we find in "Saules" (Willows) for example that "La brise chavire les feuilles/Et la lumière saute autour/Ordered as in the breeze reversing every leaf/and the light playing around", which both as image and as rhythm fails to convey the full vigour and vividness of the French. Again, in "Au croyais tout: tranquille . . . tic-tiaas"

Les yeux ouverts les yeux de chair
trop grands ouverts
Envahis regardent passer
Les yeux les bouches les cheveux
Cette lumière trop vibrante
Qui déchire à corps de rayons
La pâleur du ciel de l'automne. . .

become in English

Wide-open eyes too carnally open
eyed and flooded
Survey the pilgrimage
Of eyes mouths hair
This light too vibrant
Stripping this pallor
From the autumn sky

a change that surely tones down to vanishing point the quasi-baroque ideas behind "déchire" and "rayons". Indeed, though Mr Glassco's translations are straightforward and sometimes concise than the originals, he tends occasionally to flatten the sonorities.

But it would be petty to pick at minor points of disagreement when Mr Glassco has performed such a valuable service in making the whole of Saint-Denys-Garneau's oeuvre available to the English reader—and in an edition, moreover, that is liberally spaced and maintains Oberon's high standards of book production. If the larger question as to the extent that the emerging poetic sensibility in Canada in Canadian society and economy, at least we now have in one volume the necessary basis for that evaluation.

The case for John McCullagh's book on the other hand is less obvious. Her intention is clear enough: to rectify the balance in the relative status of various Canadian literary magazines of the 1940s and early 1950s because she feels that *Contemporary Verse* has not received from critics the attention and praise it deserves. In pursuing this aim she does indeed manage to re-create something of the literary atmosphere of the 1940s but the result still reads more like a reconstructed thesis (which it is) than anything that needed to be a book in its own right. Mostly it adds a long, sprawling and at times repetitive footnote to Dudek and Gnarowski's *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada* and while its apparatus—footnotes, bibliography, an index of all contributors to *Contemporary Verse* and an index to the book itself—will doubtless provide useful scholarly tools, the book fails except intermittently to make us feel why *Contemporary Verse* was so important in terms of its literary standards.

The book includes many quoted comments in which Alan Crawley and his contributors discuss and evaluate issues of the magazine or each other's work, but the author makes almost no attempt at independent literary assessment, as distinct from the large number of "testimonials" from contributors and others.

Both her general statements about traditional and modern Canadian poetry and her (rare) judgments on specific works have that air of faded, encapsulated authority reminiscent of British Council booklets. On page forty, for instance, we read of Earle Birney's "Damnation of Vancouver":

> It is a more ambitious undertaking and more literary and scholarly. But Birney fails to universalize the experience of the poem, and the alliance of slangy, contemporary city life, native lore, and medieval English history is uneasy. In "Damnation of Vancouver" Birney attempts to do in large what he did so brilliantly on a small scale in "Anglo-Saxon Street".

For readers who know the poem this comment is inadequate, for those who don't, misleading. Either way, the function of such a mini-critique in what reads essentially as a factual narrative appears ambiguous, especially since elsewhere we are merely presented for the most part with lists of poets' names with little attempt to distinguish between them.

Part of the problem with this book, however, lies in the kind of editor that Crawley was and the kind of magazine he shaped. Ms McCullagh offers an attractive portrait of the man, starting from his family background and early career in law, through the blindness that afflicted him at the age of forty-six and his subsequent attempts to overcome this "handicap", to the founding of the magazine in 1941.

All this is duly documented. From the beginning, Crawley committed *Contemporary Verse* to a policy of eclectiticism, perhaps he could obtain within it no literary politics. Crawley characterized as having "no taste" and his editorship was of crucial value to beginning writers: *Contemporary Verse* was the first to publish major Canadian poets such as Waddington and Macpherson. Crawley took up Margaret Atwood and Phyllis Webb at a very early stage in their development. The editorial relationship with Wilkinson brings out a dedication to literature and literary standards beyond the call of duty. Nevertheless, by early 1953 the literary atmosphere in Canada had changed: many of Crawley's early contributors had gone away or ceased to write, or he felt discouraged by the lack of worthwhile new manuscripts as well as uncertainty his own literary responses had changed poetic scene. By the 1960s, too, three new literary magazines had appeared—*Preview*, *Fiddlehead*, and, later, *Contact*—and *Contemporary Verse* was no longer the unique outlet for Canadian modernist poetry. Crawley, especially, under Raymond Souster's editorship, was evangelizing for the American Black Mountain poets who were to become such a major influence on the second wave of subsequent Canadian poetry.

Thus the magazine's very strengths makes *Contemporary Verse*, despite the initial financial difficulties that beset all little magazines, paradoxically much more an "establishment" organ than more partisan successors. *Contemporary Verse* helped to establish norms and names that have had a major impact on recent Canadian poetry but for that very reason its story, though worthy and worthwhile telling in detail, comes nowhere less dramatic than that of more meteoric, oppositional publications. Since Ms McCullagh takes for granted the role of the magazine in modernist literature this important area of discussion does not figure in her book: we does any consideration of the possible attitudes to editing as a decent book, then, would ideally considering its high standard undoubtedly more audience librarians think at the general reader.

Maybe what Canadian literature most needs now, anyway, is stocktaking so much as a clear, comprehensive critical assessment of the whole literary scene in all its variety and vitality, in an attempt to rediscover for the present generation of Canadian poets the possible coherent critical standards that Crawley exemplified throughout the 1940s.

Fin-de-siècle Montreal: Senator Drummond's exuberant house in Sherbrooke Street was demolished in the 1930s and the site is now occupied by the thirty-storey International Aviation Building. One of the photographs in Lost Montreal by Luc d'Iberville-Moreau (183pp including 154 illustrations. Oxford University Press. £12.75).

Executive initiatives

By Richard Simeon

THOMAS A. HOCKIN:
Government in Canada
252pp. Wolfenfeld and Nicolson. £7.95.

Non-Canadian readers have lacked a brief survey of the central features of Canadian government. Thomas Hockin has filled the gap with *Government in Canada*, a readable study which will be useful both for teachers who wish to include some Canadian material in courses on comparative politics and for general readers. With the devolution debate under way, the Canadian model perhaps deserves more attention than it has so far received in the United Kingdom.

Professor Hockin's analysis centres on the autonomous, dynamic role time Canadian governments, federal and provincial, have played in building and maintaining a Canadian society and economy. Government is not a reflection of social forces; rather it moulds and directs them. This elitist view of government is reinforced by the stress he places on, bureaucratic power, the role of the Cabinet, the strength of the Prime Minister and the leader-dominated character of the parties.

The focus on government as entrepreneur is appropriate, given the fragile and tenuous character of Canada, with the centripetal forces of regional and linguistic division and external influences, primarily from the United States. Moreover, Professor Hockin argues, this role is facilitated by traditions of executive dominance inherited from Britain, by the Tory and collectivist impulses which distinguish Canadian political culture from the more liberal American model, and by considerable mass consensus.

But the story of strong government, he emphasizes, is not simply that of centralisation in the hands of the federal government. Rather, there is a similar tradition of strong government at the provincial level as well. Thus, federalism does not mean weak government, and results in simultaneous, and often conflicting, efforts both at nation-building and at provincial community-building. The latter is most evident in Quebec, but is not limited to it; Professor Hockin provides a good summary of the complex pattern of federal and provincial interaction in policy-making which results. Unfortunately this viewpoint, developed in an early chapter, is neglected later in the book where the focus is almost entirely on Ottawa.

Professor Hockin provides an excellent analysis of the growth of government and the character of policy initiatives since Confederation, with special emphasis on the state's role as an agent of economic development, which has involved a mass of loans, subsidies, public investment, technical assistance, favourable tax provisions, much more public ownership than in the United States, and so on. Somewhat paradoxically, this tradition of positive government was fostered by conservative ideologies. Progressive ideas were weak—the Canadian welfare state developed relatively late, and private enterprise was the primary medium for state-sponsored development.

This approach justifies Professor Hockin's concentration, in the later parts of the book, on the formal machinery of government. Little attention is paid to mass politics, voting, interest groups and political parties. What there is emphasizes how much these support the executive-centred policy process and contributes to national integration: "The state is able to grow" thanks to parties "which appeal to the mass in such a way as to permit the state system . . . considerable autonomy." The chapters on the public service and Parliament provide useful, up-to-date summaries.

While Parliament does play various useful roles, the general conclusion is of a centrally initiating executive [illegible] Parliament is [illegible] legal [illegible] analysis. However, remains [illegible] what conventional, and little attempt is made to relate systematically the pattern of policies described to the institutions and processes of government.

This government-centred interpretation is plausible. But it leads Professor Hockin to downplay some important characteristics of Canadian politics. He emphasizes Canada's relative success at achieving national integration, and minimises the continuing threat of Quebec separatism and other conflicts. In his image of the government's effect on "society", he does not explore potential or actual divisions, or examine how much power the government has been allied with particular group interests. He overestimates mass support for the system and underplays the significance of parties of mass protest, especially in Quebec and the west. He notes the striking weakness of class politics, at least at the level of national elections, but does not go on to ask why it is so weak, whether its absence partly facilitates dominance of corporate interests at the level of government. Most important, he fails to explore the reasons for the imbalance in Canadian political strength of executive power on the one hand, and the underdevelopment of mechanisms for popular participation on the other.

Politicians, in the major parties at least, share an approach to administrative, managerial and accommodation of conflict, but mobilisation of discontents; interest groups are thoroughly integrated into administrative [illegible] [illegible] legal [illegible] tion with regionalism and national unity freezes out other demands of politics. Professor Hockin generally approves the consensual tone which results, and agrees with the theorists of "consociational democracy" for whom "elite accommodation" and minimal group involvement is the best framework for achieving stability in a society deeply divided along ethnic or cultural lines.

But in many ways this [illegible] does not fit the Canadian case. Professor Hockin fails to explore the course of the system he describes. More radical interpretations of Canadian society and politics, such as those of John Porter or Charles Taylor, are left out. Within his own perspective, however, he provides a valuable and judicious assessment of the structure and operation of Canadian government.

The function of contradictions

By Geza Vermes

C. K. BARRETT:
The Gospel of John and Judaism
101pp. SPCK. £3.50 (paperback, £1.95).

"Salvation is of the Jews" (John iv, 22) and "You (Jews) are from your father, the devil" (viii, 44): these are not contradictory statements, comments C. K. Barrett in *The Gospel of John and Judaism*. The evangelist expresses both opinions. Antithesis as exemplified here is, in Professor Barrett's view, the most essential characteristic of the fourth gospel. "This Gospel contains Judaism, non-Judaism, and anti-Judaism", he writes. And again, "John combines Gnosis and anti-Gnosticism . . . apocalyptic with non-apocalyptic material . . . a deep interest in the apostolic foundation of the church with an indifference toward it as an institution".

At the end of what seems to be a full discussion of the environment and purpose of John's gospel, and of its language, provenance and historical background, Professor Barrett feels fully able to conclude that it is not mainly Jewish, nor mainly Hellenistic-Gnostic, but a Christian work containing a mixture of Jewish and Gentile ingredients. Nevertheless, the solution arrived at in this little book is not the customary British compromise. Professor Barrett firmly proclaims that the final criterion in an evaluation of the fourth gospel is Judaism. He maintains that if he can discover to which kind of Judaism it is related, and define the precise nature of the relationship, he will be in a position to advance substantially our understanding of the Johannine problem.

Professor Barrett rejects the theory that the present text is merely a Greek translation of an original written in Aramaic, and is content to explain the Jewish colouring of the gospel as deriving from the influence of a biblical vocabulary, from John's liking for the style of the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament), and from the Palestinian origin of much of the narrative material incorporated into the final composition.

Besides being convinced that the imagery adopted by John, such as that of light and darkness, etc, is Gentile and Gnostic, the author gives as his main reason for circumscribing the Jewish dimension of the fourth gospel that towards the end of the first century AD Judaism and Christianity were already set on a collision course, and sought to keep themselves apart.

Professor Barrett's expertise in handling the New Testament is in contrast to a certain lack of assurance in dealing with Jewish documents in general, and to his almost fundamentalist position vis-à-vis the Talmud. For example, two of the terms of comparison favoured by previous interpretations of the fourth gospel—Philo and the Dead Sea Scrolls—are in the main discarded because they chronologically antedate John by a couple of generations, although we know that with a minimum of critical dexterity they can be made to render considerable service. As for the rabbinic writings, it is enough that they should mention a person (e.g. Rabban Gamaliel) who lived c AD 100, or an event (e.g. the introduction of a curse against heretics into the Jewish daily prayer) said to have occurred at that time, for their testimony to be accepted as, if I may say so, gospel truth, despite the fact that the dates of their compilation also range from between one and four centuries later than St John's gospel.

The ban imposed by Jewish authorities some time after the destruction of the Temple on the daily recital of the Ten Commandments in order to prevent certain heretics from claiming the preeminence of the Decalogue over the rest of the Law, is identified by Professor Barrett as an anti-Christian measure. This is intrinsically unlikely. Such a change in Palestinian synagogue worship would have been prompted by Palestinian Christianity. Yet we know that the Judeo-Christians refused to choose between ethical and ritual precepts, but remained faithful to the practice of the whole Mosaic Law. In consequence, they cannot have been the heretics who provoked this liturgical innovation.

In short, the Jewish evidence assembled by Professor Barrett in the elaboration of his thesis, and his consequent diminution of the Jewish content of the fourth gospel, fail to carry conviction.

To broaden the context, one wonders whether this new, wholly successful attempt at defining the relationship between a gospel and Judaism is symptomatic of the present state of New Testament studies. These studies made definite advances earlier in this century on three fronts. First, the understanding of the language of the New Testament improved considerably thanks to papyri found in Egypt testifying to the Greek used in non-literary documents at the turn of the eras. Second, the structure and purpose of the gospels were given a fresh interpretation by *Formgeschichte* or form-criticism: i.e, by relating the form of separate literary units to a "life-situation" in the early Church it became possible to perceive the need to which each unit responded and the aim it was intended to fulfil. Third, the Jewish substance underlying the Greek text also received fresh attention from the points of view of philology and literary parallels.

Yet, whereas interest in the first two was general, the Jewish aspects were never fully developed. To start with, few, if any, Jewish specialists in rabbinic literature knew enough about the New Testament to be able to pursue comparative research, and even fewer showed a willingness to do so. As for the handful of Christian experts in Judaica, they faced an almost superhuman task. Rabbinic literature is a fantastic medley of law, social customs, liturgy, doctrine, artificial dissputes, anecdotes and even jokes, dating from between the second century BC and the fifth century AD: from the chronological angle it is simply chaotic. In other words, it is an enormous field and the labourers were few. Yet something had to be done.

To assist in this most complex province of research, German New Testament scholarship devised two remarkable working tools. The first is a monumental collection of rabbinic parallels published in the 1920s, the famous *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* by Strack and Billerbeck. All the rabbinic texts, irrespective of their dates, thought by the compilers to display any similarity to the New Testament are listed here in New Testament order, according to book, chapter and verso. The second work, begun in 1933 and completed only recently, is Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*. This dictionary examines all the important Greek terms employed in the New Testament in the light of their use in the Old Testament, Hellenistic and Palestinian post-biblical Jewish literature, and in the New Testament itself.

Neither of these textbooks is perfect. Strack-Billerbeck lacks a sense of history and often manifests theological bias. Kittel tries to be historical, but represents, especially in the earlier volumes, a scholarly attitude to Judaica which is now out of date. Both take the New Testament as their starting-point and marshal the Jewish evidence accordingly. Parallels unnoticed by the respective authors naturally do not appear in either work.

Such weaknesses would not matter greatly if these books were used for the purpose for which they were conceived, namely to help and promote independent studies in comparative research. But instead, Billerbeck and Kittel were soon tacitly canonized and subconsciously acknowledged as containing the sum total of Judaica needed by an interpreter of the New Testament. In fact, the strange spectacle is not infrequently witnessed of a New Testament scholar showing suspicion of the reliability of the gospels but accepting unhesitatingly every statement printed in Strack-Billerbeck or Kittel! "The words and phrases of the scribes are weightier than the words of the Law": it is ironical in the circumstances that this rabbinic quotation has often been pilloried by Christian theologians as irreligious.

Thus in a very real sense the two great textbooks, instead of stimulating scholarship, have affected it deleteriously. Their basic quality has given the impression that the labyrinths of rabbinic literature can be bypassed. But there, as in all other fields, an absence of personal familiarity with the sources is bound to lead only to uncertainty, superficiality and error.

Short cuts never pay. Besides, since the publication of Strack-Billerbeck and several volumes of Kittel, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and, to a lesser but still considerable extent, of Targum Neofiti 1—a full Aramaic paraphrase of the Pentateuch—have further revolutionized the Jewish contribution to New Testament exegesis. It is surely here, in the "inter-Testamental" field, that lies the key to progress in the understanding of the beginnings of Christianity. This means that to raise New Testament studies to a level to which they are academically entitled, the happy-go-lucky style in the training of specialists must be improved upon. British universities appear to bear a heavier guilt here than the major seats of learning in Europe or the United States. Most of the relevant syllabuses should be so revised that language (Greek, *and* Hebrew, *and* Aramaic) and history (classical *and* Jewish) are given the prominence they deserve. New Testament scholarship could then expect to become healthy, vigorous and creative before the start of the next millennium.

Spiritual saga

By Aldhelm Cameron-Brown

THOMAS MERTON:
The Seven Storey Mountain
429pp. Sheldon Press. £5.50.

One theme runs through Thomas Merton's writings from first to last and gives them a certain unity: freedom. Christ came to set us free, and if monastic life and obedience are not seen as at the service of that freedom they are simply a return to the Old Testament. *The Seven Storey Mountain*, an account of Merton's search for freedom, was first published in America nearly thirty years ago, and became a best-seller. The success was repeated in England; but the English edition, entitled *Elected Silence*, had been edited by Evelyn Waugh; the present book is our first glimpse of the original.

Waugh corrected many points of syntax and punctuation (Merton was a born writer, but not a trained one). He also cut out many passages, sometimes long ones. Some passages he excised because they were too diffuse, or obscure to English readers. Others he must have felt might give offence. The account of the dark, sinister and corrupt atmosphere of Cambridge is merely ludicrous, if startling; but Merton's attack on Anglicanism, based on minimal personal contact, is indefensible.

In fact, while the Merton on fire for social justice—the friend of Daniel Berrigan, the writer who inspired many Americans, from his Kentucky hermitage, in their struggle against war and social injustice—is already present in this book and contributes several powerful passages, the Merton whose religious sympathies were to be so wide that many people thought (quite wrongly) that he died a Buddhist hardly appears. When he wrote the book, Merton had still the arrogance and confidence of the recent convert. In later years he would view the world with more compassion, and the monastery with more realism; indeed, this realism is already emerging in the fine closing sections of *The Seven Storey Mountain*.

In spite of weak passages, it remains a remarkable account of one man's spiritual development. Merton's view of corrupt Western society may be more acceptable to the generation that can endure Pasolini's final film than it was to the optimistic generation of the 1950s. His exaggerated view of his own corruption perhaps owes something to St Augustine. But if the book manifests some of the weaknesses of Tridentine Catholicism, it also manifests the strength, the beauty, the strong sense of tradition and of the company of the saints which were the glory of the Tridentine church.

Merton sees the anonymity of the monk as a liberation from bondage to self-will: today we might rather see the monk as discovering his own personality, liberated from the anonymity of mass civilization. This too appears in Merton's later writings: both views have truth. One mission Merton appears to have had was to recall monks to a realization of the contemplative dimension of their vocation (not that it was ever completely forgotten, but legalism and activism had tended to overlay it). This comes out in the last pages of the book. In later writings he did more than anyone, perhaps, to show that Christianity too has a mystical dimension, and the vitality of the American Cistercian houses today must owe much to him.

The Seven Storey Mountain appears to be an exact photographic reproduction of the original edition, without the dedication and with some early photographs of Merton. No two photographs of Merton ever look like the same person; but then he was a man of many facets.

Faith in activity

By Maurice Wiles

JERRY H. GILL:
Ian Ramsey
To Speak Responsibly of God
166pp. Allen and Unwin. £5.25.

When I went up to Cambridge in 1945, it never occurred to me to think that the small bustling, welcoming figure who greeted me as Chaplain and Director of Studies would prove to be one of the outstanding figures of his generation in the Church of England. Yet of the extent and range of Ian Ramsey's contribution to the life of the Church there can be no serious doubt and it has been the subject of many well-merited tributes. What is perhaps less certain is how substantial and how lasting his contribution in the realm of Christian ideas will turn out to be.

Jerry H. Gill, an American scholar who studied under Ramsey at Oxford ten years ago, has already published a collection of Ramsey's writings entitled *Christian Empiricism* (Sheldon Press, 1974). In *Ian Ramsey* he has provided an account of Ramsey's philosophical thought following much the same order and arrangement as the earlier collection of papers. The book fulfils the limited objective that it sets itself by giving a clear and sympathetic account of Ramsey's position. The specialist will probably feel that for him the book does not replace or add very much to the briefer but extremely perceptive articles of D. D. Evans in *Religious Studies* (1971).

How important and how difficult a task is it to give such a systematic account of Ramsey's thought? Ramsey produced no major work himself; his ideas are embodied in a number of short books and occasional papers. That fact suggests that there is need for a major work of synthesis and interpretation. Yet, just as each sign in the fourth gospel appears to contain the whole message of the gospel in itself, so it can be claimed that each of Ramsey's writings embodies the substance of his position with variation only in expression and application. On that score this task of systematic presentation might appear easy or even superfluous. Whichever view is taken, Dr Gill's book does the task of exposition in a workmanlike way, but does not set out to do much more than that. It offers a few hints of developments within Ramsey's thought in response to changing philosophical fashion and to particular criticisms in his lifetime, but these remain no more than hints.

The main issue on which those criticisms fix is whether the "disclosures" of which Ramsey speaks have any objective reference or whether they are purely "subjective experiences". On the last page of the book Dr Gill suggests that towards the end of his life Ramsey was seeking to deal with one aspect of this fundamental problem by closer attention to the concept of activity. That is undoubtedly the case. In an unpublished paper written in the last year of his life Ramsey wrote,

> for me *activity* is a word which I use not equivocally nor even analogically, but univocally about God and man. . . . This it is which makes sure in the last resort we are talking of God in a way that is *reliable*, and not just engaging in talk of our own making.

And in my last conversation with him a few weeks before his death, he stressed the great importance he attached to this claim as giving a firm anchorage to our talk about God. Certainly he was trying by this means to deal with a problem on which his critics were pressing for clearer affirmation. He did not live to develop this answer. I am not convinced that the claim that "activity" is used univocally about God and man was the right line of answer to pursue. I am doubtful whether it can be maintained consistently with the epistemological approach that underlies his main approach to religious language. But none the less I agree with Dr Gill that the criticisms can be met and are not fatal to the structure of Ramsey's position as a whole.

To what assessment of Ramsey's work does this book point? Ramsey, as Dr Gill clearly brings out, developed a way of seeing theology which for him at least, combined a broadly empirical approach with a firm Christian faith. If, as I believe, the approach that he developed was basically sound, there is room for further, more critical studies of his work—not in the sense of studies more hostile in intent than Dr Gill's, but ones which will probe more deeply into the sources of his ideas and which will "contextualise" it more precisely in terms of its particular occasions. To many people it is puzzling that Ramsey's "disclosures" disclosed for him so specifically and concretely Christian a faith. Any fuller assessment of his thought will need to pay careful attention to his deep roots in and affection for the historic Christian tradition as well as his engagement with contemporary philosophy.

Ramsey's failure to produce any major systematic work was not just a matter of chance or of his readiness to give himself unreservedly to the needs of the individual moment. It flowed also from the style of his thought. What at all costs is to be avoided is that scholasticism which so often seeks to perpetuate the insights of a seminal thinker by repeating them in their original form with the tiresome addition of minor refinements of detail. Fortunately, Ramsey was intuitable and is likely to escape being the object of such mistaken expression of loyalty. But philosophers of religion and exponents of Christian doctrine will do well to pursue their crafts in the general style and spirit that he pioneered with such character and verve.

Frankness and a sense of purpose

By Susannah Clapp

HILMA WOLITZER:
Ending
223pp. W. H. Allen. £3.50.

ELIZABETH RILEY:
All that False Instruction
247pp. Angus and Robertson. £3.50.

Both these novels are written in the first person, by and about women, and aim at the frank exposure of a problem. Both suffer from the same difficulty: parading their crusading purpose too openly, they isolate their subject too nearly—speaking of understandable unhappiness in sanctifying terms.

Ending is a woman's account of her husband's death from cancer. The course and consequences of his illness yield a plot which moves from diagnosis through the breaking of news to patient and family, to daily deterioration and eventual death. They also provoke a good deal of general retrospection and speculation: the narrator talks to her friend about "death and love and anxiety and about all the hazards of being alive"; relives scenes with her husband which evoke the "sibling quality" of their relationship, and decides that, despite his great gifts as a photographer, "conditions of the spirit are evasive, maybe even unphotographable".

Scornful reference is made to other characters' "stock phrases" about death and their lack of connection with the protagonists' "real lives", but *Ending* really serves to demonstrate the difficulty, and to some extent the foolishness, of trying to forge such connections—this despite the fact that it is often, and surprisingly, crisp and unsentimental. Looking at someone's life from the vantage-point of their early death almost invariably means that those large qualities which tug at the heart by their suggestion of death defiance—here "hopefulness, that unswayable pleasure in living"—are stressed, while the sense of someone's day-to-day self is diminished. Everything inevitably ends up drenched in the pathos of "if only we'd known then . . .".

All that False Instruction is subtitled "a novel of lesbian love" and is set in Australia. The instruction" proves to be [illegible] and not unpredictable. The protagonist is made to dry the dishes than her brother, is warned about menstruation, despised at school for being [illegible] and meets quick-coming [illegible] tell her that girls should [illegible] in bed. In "the dim opening [illegible] the rain forest" she has long conversations with women friends [illegible] when she goes on to [illegible] "firework supercome" and [illegible] flesh luminous" with the ostracized, persecuted and [illegible] unfully feels obliged to go [illegible] Afghanistan.

Much is made in this [illegible] the suffering caused the [illegible] by "the ordinary, normal [illegible] cent bastards" who regard [illegible] blanism as "my distinguishing [illegible] ture, my definition". But [illegible] quite, though distressing, is [illegible] surprising since her own [illegible] never stray far from the [illegible] And comfort is available, [illegible] she is slow to take it: it must [illegible] to find, in a world where the [illegible] are invariably incompetent [illegible] sentient in bed, that the [illegible] of going to bed with women [illegible] abundant.

Masters of meiosis

By T. J. Binyon

ALISTAIR MACLEAN:
The Golden Gate
246pp. Collins. £3.50.

Thrillers usually fall into one of two classes. In the first, the line of which runs through Bulldog Drummond to James Bond and beyond, the plot is always essentially that the hero, having got himself, through misplaced chivalry or sheer boneheadedness, into a situation where the diabolical villain—Carl Peterson or another—can gloat over his helplessness, then, taking advantage of an equal boneheadedness on the part of the villain, extricates himself by the use of his thews rather than his wit. In the second class, of which John Buchan's novels are an example, the hero is confronted with a more intellectual problem which he eventually solves through the equal exertion of brain and body.

Alistair MacLean's books belong to the second class rather than the first. He shares with Buchan a predilection for depicting men at the limit of physical endurance, while the plots of his novels are usually concerned with the hero's attempts to detect the bad apple among a closely knit group of characters and proceed, through a series of peripeties, to the final unmasking. *Where Eagles Dare*, one of his best stories, is a good example. He is a curiously old-fashioned writer: though a pretty girl appears in each cast list, sex is kept rigorously offstage. His heroes—and this is a trait which comes from Sapper not Buchan—are masters of meiosis, shrugging off danger and disaster with a terse quip or two; a characteristic which is thrown into relief by the author's own tendency towards heavy-handed overstatement: sofas are "so soft and comfortable that the overweight man possessed of prudent foresight would have thought twice about ensconcing himself in them, for regaining the vertical would have called for an apoplectic amount of will-power or the use of a crane".

Although Mr MacLean's gift for telling a story has not diminished, his latest books have seemed more and more to be parodies of his earlier ones: his heroes have become actors whose insouciance in the face of danger is not due to bravery but to their knowledge of the final page of the script, while the plots themselves are beginning to lose their capacity to astonish the reader.

In *The Golden Gate* a gang of crooks led by Peter Brainson—one of the few tech-criminals with a PhD in economics—carry out an operation of surgically military precision" to hijack a motorcade containing the President of the United States and the rulers of two major oil-producing countries as it is crossing the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. For the release of their prisoners they demand a ransom of $500m. Luckily for the American taxpayer an FBI agent with a mind "as near lethal as any man's can be" is not far away. *The Golden Gate* is a difficult book to put down, but it turns the final page with some disappointment: there is no reserve for us the Latin verses of that surprise in the plot—both heraldic genius, Giovanni Pico della villain are obvious from the Mirandola. Here are forty pages ning. And the former no longer written for specialists and packed has to rely on his wits and his with information that not everyone hands; he has a battery of will want to read, but everyone will to help him, ranging from miniaturized transceivers, through recognize their high quality.

When men were men

CATHERINE GAVIN:
Traitor's Gate
285pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £4.25.

Novels of the last war tend to concentrate on patchos—on air raids and Dunkirk and spies and prison camps and the British in their finest hour—but have little to say about the stress of political purposes which hold these patches in place. *Traitor's Gate* is unusual in that it takes in both front and backstage events and allows them to seem uncertain and contradictory. At the centre of the story is de Gaulle. He is seen as a bully and a fool whose arrogance and vanity blind him to the necessary details of efficient administration so that he gets nothing right except his public relations. He cannot even distinguish loyal followers from German agents.

Catherine Gavin tells the story of two Frenchmen who find themselves in London in 1940 facing a conflict of loyalties. They cannot return to France and accept the rule of Pétain, neither can they accept the bungling authority of the monster de Gaulle. One of them has been a record-breaking civilian pilot but he is now thought to be unfit to fly. He is threatened with internment, feels London is closing in on him, suddenly, rather unexpectedly, flies to Brazil to rebuild his life with the help of a Euro-Afro-Indian girl pilot. As a character he is convincing while he is in London, but when he books his passage to Rio de Janeiro he effectively signs off into the sphere of cardboard romance. The other Frenchman is similarly elusive. He has arrived in Scotland after the Allied defeat at Dunkirk and [illegible] Higher, faster, farther [illegible] intact, and [illegible] enterprise fire [illegible] California [illegible] On their way home to the United States in 1919 the two Dancers—Ira is the level-headed pilot, Tom the madcap type—and a chum Curly realize that the [illegible] in flying machines ("Some day you won't go from Los Angeles to New York by train; you'll fly," he smiled. "I mean it", Curly [illegible] 'Someday they'll fly the ocean.") All three move out West and [illegible] up shop with money won at poker. Thereafter Dancers flourish and multiply as generation succeeds generation and war is followed by war: old pals are snuffed out and [illegible] new models, mild domestic dramas flare and fade, the sex becomes steamier as the years roll by, the old sigh at the follies of the young. Aeronautical *bustle* everywhere for a bonanza; the author is a kind of man who does his homework first.

Jeremy Lewis

Corporation romance

RICHARD MARTIN STERN:
Brood of Eagles
518pp. Secker and Warburg. £[illegible]

The penultimate page of this dynastic saga about the stringbrown paper to jet age fortunes of Dancer Aircraft finds the young hero in the family business thoughtful mood. Should he take the advice of McNulty, a hard technocrat in rimless specs, and accept a merger with a major industrial conglomerate; or can he afford to remain true to the ideals and enthusiasms of genuine aircraft makers like old Tom Dancer, the founder of the firm and a veteran of dogfights over the Western Front?

A nation remembered and honoured its dead; could not a corporation do the same, and for the same reason: to give a sense of tradition and a feeling of responsibility to those who came after, to place upon their shoulders the responsibility to carry on the dream?

The dream of [illegible] intact, and [illegible]

Readings in two millenia

By R. R. Bolgar

D. M. KIRKWOOD (Editor):
Poetry and Poetics from Ancient Greece to The Renaissance
Studies in Honor of James Hutton
236pp. Cornell University Press. $9.60.

The range of the articles in this volume corresponds, the editor tells us, to the breadth and variety of James Hutton's literary studies. Since the list of the authors who are discussed extends from Homer to Ezra Pound, and since the discussions exemplify half-a dozen different forms of scholarship, a reader may be forgiven if he finds himself wishing that Professor Hutton had been a little less catholic in his interests. But credit must be given where it is deserved, and it would be wrong not to look beyond the book's chaotic diversity. This tribute to the great historian of the Greek Anthology is a serious work. It contains some excellent material that will figure for many years in specialized bibliographies.

The two contributions that promise most obviously to be of lasting value have only a remote connection with poetry and poetics. They are accounts by distinguished scholars of manuscripts they have examined. Kurt Weitzmann Wallach describes an Anglo-Saxon syllogé of inscriptions owned by the University of Illinois. E. O. Kristeller provides a systematic survey of the codices which preserve for us the Latin verses of that eccentric genius, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Here are forty pages written for specialists and packed with information that not everyone will want to read, but everyone will recognize their high quality.

Alongside these summaries of research are two useful general surveys. Isidore Silver's notes on French poets in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance acknowledge a substantial debt to secondary authorities. But he has drawn his information from such a profusion of sources, and the problem he is examining—the relations between music and poetry—has received so little notice in the past, that his attempt at consolidation is bound to be welcome. It is true that he might have told us more about Jean Lemaire de Belges, who had a deeper understanding of music than the meagre account of his work suggests; and it is true that one regrets the absence of any reference to Scotland, a country intimately linked to France, where the interplay of music and poetry during the Renaissance has been extensively studied in recent years. The article has these marginal shortcomings. All the same, it is true that students are bound to find it extremely helpful. Equally helpful, if rather different in kind, is the essay by D. P. Walker who has for the past two decades been our surest guide through the labyrinth of fifteenth and sixteenth-century occultism. An excursus on method, in which he distinguishes various types of symbolic statement leads him to a striking conclusion:

> What you do not find at this period is anything like the various modern theories which explain the multiplicity of more or less hidden meanings in some kinds of language, especially poetic or religious, not by the author's intentional obscurity, but by some aesthetic principle such as the value of ambiguity in Empson, or the creative nature of language in Croce or Cassirer, or by the action of a Freudian or Jungian subconscious.

He then examines why men should have wished to hide the meaning of their words under a veil. Fear of persecution played a part, but it will not explain every instance of Renaissance mystification. Some writers held that truths revealed to the vulgar ran the risk of being transmitted further in a bowdlerized form. A parable or its equivalent had therefore the merit of preserving valuable insights during their passage through inferior minds. Another theory, influential in the religious field, was that statements about divine matters needed to be obscure, for otherwise there would be no merit in belief, since what was clearly intelligible required no moral effort for its acceptance. In this, the esoteric tradition came very close to Pascal.

The remaining six contributors all write about specific literary problems. Piero Pucci and Michael Stokes are the most interesting. They make a very deliberate effort to be up to date. Professor Pucci writing on Hesiod owes a good deal to recent French and German studies. He begins by reminding us of a statement that the muses make in the introduction to the *Theogony*: "We know how to utter many lies similar to what is true, but when we so desire, we know how to sing the truth", and he works his way to the conclusion that Hesiod believed at one and the same time that poetic statements were true and that they were different from truth.

This essay is the most ambitious piece in the book. It deals with an issue of substantial importance—the relations of fiction to fact—and it does so in a topical way. Yet it is, for all its merits, unsatisfactory. Schematic arguments, whose clarity impresses like a Thomistic demonstration, alternate with passages where no effort is made to achieve precision. Hesiod did not distinguish between lying and fiction or between truth and reality. Professor Pucci copies him in this and, what is worse, fails to mention the difficulties which result from such confusions.

When poetry is pictured as promoting forgetfulness of grief, he scents a paradox: poetry, which is truth, diverts men's minds from the truth of their state. But the paradox derives entirely from the highly generalized form in which the situation has been presented. Common sense sees nothing odd about an accurate statement of past events being able to distract men's attention from the present reality of their troubles. And this is not the only disturbing feature of Professor Pucci's argument. He confuses us further by examining side issues in extravagant detail. We are enticed along a chain of "strategies", "polarities", "articulations" and "structures" to a conclusion that connects Hesiod's seeming ambivalence on the subject of "truth" with the view that language inevitably distorts observed fact—only to be told that this is a view to which the Greek poet did not consciously subscribe. The reader comes to suspect that Professor Pucci's real purpose is not to elucidate Hesiod's thought but simply to create opportunities which will allow him to apply modern linguistic and philosophical concepts in a classical context.

Professor Stokes on the other hand has the air of an innovator only because students of the classics have been slow about adopting a technique that has been used in other literary disciplines for a couple of decades. He analyses the preface to Lucretius, Book III, showing how the poet repeats individual sounds, words and ideas, and how this repetition has the effect of building up the high estimate he has of the intellectual clarity we owe to Epicurus. We know from Cicero that Lucretius was regarded as a painstaking craftsman already in his own lifetime, and one is glad to have this further proof of his competence. But can it be true, as the article suggests, that Lucretian scholarship should now concentrate on extending this type of analysis to cover the whole of the *De Rerum Natura*? It is for intending writers to study craftsmanship. Readers have a different task, which is to react independently to the ideas and impressions that an author has tried to convey.

It is instructive to compare Professor Stokes on Lucretius with Professor MacKellar on English metamorphoses, since they both analyse excerpts from long poems. The former advances from points of detail to the general idea they convey, so that our attention is focused on method, on how the idea is presented.

The latter begins by establishing the main characteristics of the passages he considers, and any details he mentions are subordinated to this central purpose. We are made to see that Pope's account of Lodona's transformation is static, while Ovid's metamorphoses are dynamic; that Milton has a moral purpose when he describes Satan changing into a snake, while Ovid on a similar topic writes primarily to please. In short, Professor MacKellar's approach can be called rhetorical, while Professor Stokes's is systematic; and each has some merits and some defects.

The remaining essays situate themselves comfortably within the accepted traditions of classical commentary. Where exactly the original "great poet" finished his *Odyssey* has been a problem that fascinated Aristophanes of Byzantium before Sir Denys Page, and Professor Solmsen takes this as his starting point. He asks how many poets contributed to the last book of the epic and decides that its three major sections—the arrival of the suitors in the Underworld, the visit to Laertes and the fight with the suitors' kinsmen—are all by different hands. But the argument is not pressed to a conclusion and no mention is made of stylistic analysis which might have a chance of settling the matter. What is said has, however, a freshness not often found in this type of inquiry.

The essay on Pindar is similar in character. It is an attempt to solve a well-known enigma. Why at the end of the seventh Nemean ode does the encomiast make such a point of denying that he has abused Neoptolemus? The facts are not in dispute. This particular ode emphasizes the honours Neoptolemus receives at Delphi, but the mention made of him in the sixth Paean is much less favourable; and the scholia inform us that the Aeginetans were outraged by what they regarded as a slur on their local hero. Professor Kirkwood's evident concern is to shield Pindar from the charge of having recanted in the face of this criticism. He accumulates examples to demonstrate that the poet was obsessed with the alternations of glory and disaster in the history of families, and that his treatment of Neoptolemus did no more than follow this general pattern. The argument is certainly convincing, but was there a real need to put it forward? Did Pindar regard the interpretation he placed on a legend as a matter of moral significance? Ought we to treat his diplomatic pandering to the whims of a patron as if he were a Victorian theologian retracting statements about the Trinity?

Finally, we have Gordon Messing's account of Pound's "Propertius". Is it a translation? Or is it an original work? Holding fast to the principle that a poem's claim to be a translation should be examined before it is dismissed, Professor Messing reviews a long series of errors, some of which can pass as wit. But when he comes to the more bizarre fantastications, such as the "Welsh mines" with which Pound replaced the "threats of the Cimbrians" (*Cimbrorum minas*), he concludes that what we have is a new poem made out of a half-understood original; and there the matter must rest.

To say that this *Festschrift* is a worthy memorial to Professor Hutton would be to rate it too high. One would have preferred to see his scholarship commemorated by some solid and coherent work. But there is useful learning here and much that can elicit scholarly appreciation for a task neatly performed. This may not be a monument more lasting than bronze, but at any rate it will be safe from Horace's wasting rain and furious north wind on many library shelves.

Courtship in blue and black

By C. Vermeule

E. L. HAYNES:
The Portland Vase
Second edition
48pp. British Museum Publications. £2.25.

Depending on whether you are a Hellenist or a Romanist, the Portland Vase is either the last great work of the Greek vase-makers or the foremost example of such art in the part of the Romans. At least since the days of Pope Urban VIII's gifted collector-nephew Cardinal Francesco Barberini and the latter's celebrated librarian Cassiano dal Pozzo (1578-1657), the glass vase with its milky-white figures on a dark blue to black background (all imitating a sardonyx cameo) has captured the minds of antiquarian intellectuals and (since about 1810) visitors to the British Museum. Every schoolboy once heard the tale of the young alcoholic, later identifying himself as William Lloyd, who seized an Achaemenian stone sculpture on a dark afternoon in February 131 years ago and smashed the Portland Vase into over 200 fragments. ("Lloyd" spent two days in jail and was released when a friend paid the fine of £3, imposed for breaking the glass case, not the vase.) It was restored, continued as a loan from the dukes of Portland (who had bought it from the vase-collector Sir William Hamilton, Emma's husband), almost went to William Randolph Hearst at Christie's on May 2, 1929, and was finally acquired for Britain in 1945, with funds bequeathed by James Rose Vallentin. The present appearance of the vase is yet another story, of slivers put aside and refound, returned to the museum by one Amy Reeves, and partly incorporated in the definitive restoration of J. H. W. Axtell, who was long famous for such work in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities.

All this, and much more, forms the basis of the revised edition of a fascinating and popular monograph available to those who have visited the Portland Vase and to students of ancient art or lovers of Wedgwood ware throughout the world. Denys Haynes has recently retired as keeper of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, where, as successor to Bernard Ashmole, he has witnessed the final restoration and reinstallation of the vase, and has gone on to preside over a generation of renovation, publication, and acquisition in the world's foremost department of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman art. Other sections of the book treat the technique, style, and date (reign of the first Emperor Augustus, 27 BC to AD 14) of the Portland Vase. Those who know it from old drawings, engravings, or ceramic copies, remember the disc in the bottom (now removed and kept separately); also of cameo glass, this cut-down roundel represents Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy, who figured in the aftermath of the myth (the courtship of Peleus and Thetis) identified by Mr Haynes as continuous subject of the entire frieze on the vase's body. The Paris disc, however, was added to the vase after damage at a date earlier than the "Lloyd" episode, either through "heavy-handedness" or by the Duchess of Gordon (the notorious "Jenny of Monreith" or the "Flower of Galloway", died 1812) or at an unspecified date in antiquity.

One of the most enjoyable sections of this pleasant book is (in the appendix, "Other Interpretations") in which every view of the scenes on each side and continuing under the Pan-mask handles is summarized from the engage of Barberini Influence onwards. Generally, they divide between interpretations purely from the world of mythology and those which mix gods, goddesses, and heroes with notable rulers in antiquity and their women (Alexander the Great, Alexander Severus, Olympias, Mamaea, Augustus and his mother Atia, to cite at random). My only addition to the sensible scholarship of Denys Haynes is the thought that the Portland Vase with its courtship of Thetis by Peleus in the presence of marine divinities, Eros, Hermes, and Aphrodite, may have been commissioned as an allusion to the marriage of Augustus's daughter Julia to his admiral Agrippa in 21 BC or to Livia's son, the future Emperor Tiberius, in 11 BC. L. Folenco (appendix No 20) thought, rightly, that Tiberius, in 1950, he suggested, was a marriage to Marcellus in 23 BC.

Painting in the round

By B. A. Sparkes

JOHN BOARDMAN:
Athenian Red Figure Vases
The Archaic Period
252pp. Thames and Hudson. £4.95.

Nearly thirty years ago Arthur Lane in his book *Greek Pottery* commented that by modern conventional terminology, whereas everyone else made pottery, the Greeks produced vases, and he showed a certain impatience with traditional attitudes to the subject. As the title of the present book shows, "vases" are still with us, and indeed the distinction, although seemingly absurd, has its uses. The vases made and decorated by the Greeks of the Archaic and Classical periods need a specific label to indicate their special place in the history of painting and of pottery.

In a companion volume published in 1974 John Boardman supplied us with a handbook on *Athenian Black Figure Vases*; he here treats the succeeding period, the one that for many students and connoisseurs of the subject represents the peak of the vase painters' achievement.

Some may perhaps consider Greek vases and their decoration nearer to the head than to the heart; there are no fingermarks deliberately left in the wet clay to humanize the pot or cup, the figure decoration is too finite and linear, firmly linked to an anthropomorphic universe. And yet, for those who can respond to them, the vases and the scenes they carry are inexhaustibly fascinating, whether one studies the shapes and their development, the emergence of the figures from the two-dimensional world in which the black figure technique had held them, the variety of their subject-matter, the sophistication of their compositions, or the light they throw on socio-economic history.

The period covered takes us from the invention of the new technique c 530 BC up to the time two generations later when advances in monumental painting were having a destructive effect on the vase painters' work. The best is here: painters and potters who achieved a balance between form and content, a sure touch, a liveliness that accepts all aspects of life and imagination as a fit source for subject-matter: heroes struggling with monsters, gods contesting with giants, Greeks and Trojans showing the pride that follows victory and the degradation of defeat; athletes practising, revellers drinking and recovering from the effects of over-indulgence, the sexually excited finding satisfaction in one another or in themselves in explicit love scenes that mock us even today. Narrative is the very essence of this type of decoration; to claim that it has no place on pottery is to close one's eyes to a whole world.

Attributions made by Sir John Beazley and other scholars form the framework of *Athenian Red Figure Vases*, and the extensive illustrations enable us as never before to view the grand sweep of progress from the work of the first practitioners, the Andokides Painter, through the output of the Pioneers, such as Euthymides and Euphronios in the late sixth century, on to the high summer of the Kleophrades and Berlin Painters, Onesimos and the Brygos Painter and then beyond to the exquisite *retardataire*, the Pan Painter.

Once more one is grateful to the author for his masterly organization of the material, his lightness and his appreciation of the needs of scholars and students alike.

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Books in brief

Arts and Crafts

LOOMES, BRIAN. *Country Clocks and their London Origins.* 192pp. Newton Abbot: David and Charles. £5.50.

This book falls into two contrasting sections: its initial two chapters, dealing in very considerable detail with the origins of English clock-making in the London area in the sixteenth century and its development during the seventeenth century; and the remaining chapters with a broad survey of provincial clocks, their cases, dials, and special features. This second part is the result of the author's wide experience of provincial clocks of all types, but the most valuable part of the book is the study of the Fromanteel family of clockmakers, mainly of Norwich, London and Amsterdam. In this Brian Loomes builds to great effect on the fairly recent work on those makers by Dr Plomp of the Netherlands, to whom Mr Loomes pays suitable tribute. As it was Ahasuerus Fromanteel who introduced the pendulum clock to England and pioneered the form of the long-case clock, this study of his antecedents and life is of great importance. The illustrations are of only moderate quality and some of the diagrams are rather roughly drawn, but they serve the text adequately.

Classics

WINTERBOTTOM, M. and OGILVIE, R. M. (Editors). *Cornelli Taciti: Opera Minora.* 114pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £2.25.

In this new edition R. M. Ogilvie's 1967 text of the *Agricola* has replaced the Furneaux-Anderson text of 1938, while M. Winterbottom has revised the texts of both the *Germania* and the *Dialogus*. The editors did not make it their aim to present *novum quendam Cornelium*, but only *codices laboriose excussos, rectius (ut speramus) aestimatos*. The result is a welcome addition to the Oxford classical texts.

Parapsychology

DAY, HARVEY. *Occult Illustrated Dictionary.* 156pp. Kaye and Ward. £2.50.

Among the definitions of "occult" to be found here is "anything . . . communicated only to the initiated". Perhaps for fear the work should be read by the uninitiated, none of the entries is supported by any reference. Hypotheses are treated as established data, and in a phosphorescent sea of vibrations (even abstract ideas like numbers apparently produce vibrations) swim a few facts, the names of various well-known mediums, innumerable gratuitous assumptions, and some statements that are demonstrably untrue, as, for instance, that radionics is [sic] accepted by the medical profession" and that two members of the Society for Psychical Research who investigated some of Madame Blavatsky's phenomena "turned out to be confessed perjurers".

It would be interesting to know whether the Trade Descriptions Act applies to blurbs. This one says that the book "answers the growing demand for accurate information".

Sports and Pastimes

KNIGHT, NORMAN and GOLDSMITH, JOHN. *King, Queen and Knight: An Anthology.* 240pp. Kaye and Ward. £3.95.

This is the highly successful sequel to Norman Knight's classic anthology *Chess Pieces* that was published in 1949. As in that book he has selected the most interesting references to chess that have appeared in literature and elsewhere. These are classified according to the approach—In Praise of Chess, In Damnation of Chess, Chess and Phantasy, Chess and Religion, and a natural follow-up, Chess for Chess. This book is rather more wholehearted than the earlier one in one thing, there is an entire chapter on the Humour of Chess with a piece written by Harry Golombek on a visit to Russia. Those who were already acquainted with the aspect of chess are not without but it will come as a pleasant surprise to the non-chess-player to find what he imagined to be a dull and serious game is in reality full of humour.

Information wanted

Robert Burr (1850-1912): whereabouts of any of his original manuscripts.
John Parr,
102 Queenston Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 0W5, Canada.

James Beattie (1735-1803), Scottish philosopher and poet: whereabouts of any manuscript letters other than those in the major British and American libraries.
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Bibliographic Research Library, 2570 Sue Avenue, San Jose, California 95111, USA.

Charles Augustus Howell: any information about the diary which he is alleged to have kept between 1877-78.
C. L. Cline,
Box 7493, University Station, Austin, Texas 78712, USA.

Christopher Isherwood: any information about him, especially any letters, for a biography.
Brian N. Finney,
Department of Extra-Mural Studies, [illegible]

Henry James (1843-82): any information about his life and any letters to or from him.
Jean Strouse,
c/o Houghton Mifflin Co, 551 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA.

Charles William Jefferys (1869-1951), Canadian painter: any information about him and whereabouts of any letters, manuscripts, photographs or artworks, for a biographical and critical study.
Robert Stacy,
65 Metcalfe Street, Apartment 3, Toronto, M4X 1R9, Ontario, Canada.

Samuel Kelly: *An Eighteenth Century Seaman* edited by Crosbie Garstin, 1925: whereabouts of the original manuscript edited by Garstin.
R. S. Craig,
Department of History, University College, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT.

Oliver Luw, black commander in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade at the Battle of Brunete: any personal recollections, anecdotes, papers relating to his experiences for a biographical study.
John D. Cox,
Department of English, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556, USA.

Le Fanu: any information about the nineteenth-century members of this family, especially Sheridan Le Fanu, novelist and sometime editor of *The Dublin University Magazine*.
W. J. McCormack,
School of English, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT.

Eric Linklater: any letters from him and any personal stories of him.
Michael Parkinson,
6 Fields Park Road, Pontcanna, Cardiff CF1 9JP.

L'Inconnue de la Seine: any information about the historical connection, or stories and poems inspired by her. Also, where copies of her death-mask are.
David Phillips,
Department of Education, Wye College, 15 Northam Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY.

Arthur Machen: any information about his earliest days in London, particularly at Wandsworth (1880) and Turnham Green (1881).
Leonard Key,
21 Felsham Road, London.

Armand Millet (1850-1920), author of *Les Violettes*: any information about his life and work.
Glonwood, Park Farm Road, Wycombe, Bucks.

George Moore: whereabouts of any manuscripts, letters, for a biography.
Robert Bell,
18 Fitzroy Road, Marlow, Bucks.

General John Nicholson: any letters to or from his family or from James Hogg, H. Lawrence Edwardes, R. Taylor or John Nicholson.
Department of History, Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001, USA.

Edward Stuart Russell (1868-1959), biologist: whereabouts of manuscripts or letters.
Ludmilla Jordanova,
New Hall, Cambridge CB3 0DF.

Ethel Sands: whereabouts of paintings by her, for a biography.
Wendy Baron,
5 Salisbury Avenue, London 3AG.

Sir Owen Seaman (1861-1936), author of *The Battle of the Bands* and Editor of *Punch*: whereabouts of any letters or personal reminiscences, for a biography.
Wendy Baron,
146 Holland Road, London.

BELFAST EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

Applications are invited for the undernoted posts in Belfast Public Libraries:—

1 £3,825-£4,545—NJC scale AP5/SO1

(a) CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN

responsibility for book selection, staff training and children's activities in lending library service points.

(b) AREA LIBRARIAN

one of a team of three professional librarians to manage the lending service (15 full-time branches). Computer charging commenced operation April and four new branches at varying stages of development.

(c) SECONDARY SCHOOLS LIBRARIAN

to undertake planning of a new service to secondary school children within the area. An opportunity for the successful candidate to develop in conjunction with educational advisers new approaches to the organisation of a schools library service.

2 £2,922-£3,282—NJC scale AP3

ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

a number of posts in this basic professional grade are vacant throughout the library service.

For posts 1(a), 1(b), and 1(c) applicants should be qualified, preferably chartered librarians and will normally be expected to have 5 years relevant experience.

For post 2 applicants should be qualified librarians or awaiting final professional examination results.

CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY.

Application forms may be obtained from the Personnel Officer, Board Headquarters, 40 Academy Street, Belfast BT1 2NQ or will be sent on receipt of a STAMPED, SELF ADDRESSED, FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE.

Completed applications must be returned to the Personnel Officer not later than 4.00 p.m. Friday 28th May, 1976.

Royal County of BERKSHIRE

BRANCH LIBRARIAN

£3,366-£3,702 p.a.

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians for the post of Branch Librarian, Woodley.

Further particulars and application forms from the County Librarian, Abbey Mill House, Abbey Square, Reading.

Closing date: 28th May 1976

LIBRARIAN

We are an international marine and engineering consultancy, and are currently looking for a Chartered Librarian to run our technical library.

He or she would be required to maintain and introduce such systems as are necessary to the operation and development of the library which provides an information service for an engineering staff of 320.

Applicants should hold an engineering degree or equivalent and have a minimum of 3 years' experience of librarian work in a scientific or engineering environment. The salary scale (AP3) will be £3,474-£3,825.

Attractive working conditions include 22 days holiday, free life assurance, relocation expenses and an excellent contributory pension scheme.

Please write or telephone for an application form to the Personnel Manager, Y-ARD Limited, Charing Cross Tower, Glasgow G2 4PP. Telephone number 041-204 2737. (Ref. 86.)

Y-ARD

Metropolitan Borough of

WIRRAL

SENIOR CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN

£3,366-£3,702

Based at Wallasey Central Children's Library and responsible for the efficient organisation of children's services in that library. The post carries certain Wirral-wide responsibilities in connection with children's work in branch libraries. The successful candidate will be a member of the Young People's Management Team.

Application forms from the Director of Leisure Services, 8 Riversdale Road, West Kirby, Merseyside, returnable by 28 May.

Librarians in Government Departments

There are vacancies in the following Government Departments for candidates with professional qualifications and some practical experience. Those expecting to obtain professional qualifications in the Summer, 1976, will be considered.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Legal Library, Whitehall, London SW1
Ministry of Defence
Royal College of Defence Studies, London SW1
Defence Operational Analysis Establishment, West Byfleet, Surrey
Department of Employment
Library, St. James' Square, London SW1
Department of The Environment
Property Services Agency, Croydon, Surrey
Directorate of Scottish Services, Edinburgh
Department of Industry
Headquarters Library Services, Central London (2 posts)
Scottish Office
Main Library, Edinburgh
Further vacancies may arise in these and other Departments.

Further vacancies may arise in these and other

SALARY: (Inner London) £3,170 to £4,445; up to £465 less elsewhere. Starting salary may be above the minimum. Promotion prospects. Non-contributory pension scheme.

For further details and an application form (to be returned by 4 June, 1976) write to Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 1JB, or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 68551 (answering service operates outside office hours) or London 01-839 1992 (24 hour answering service). Please quote ref. G(3)624.

ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

requires

Administrator-Librarian

to run book exchange scheme with E.S.U. United States and Commonwealth and collateral service to schools, public libraries and members in this country. Professional qualifications not essential. Experience in library or publishing, organizing ability and interest in American studies and British studies abroad more important. Apply Director-General, E.S.U., Dartmouth House, Charles St., London, W1.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Education Department

School Librarian

AP4 £3,366-£3,702 p.a.

We require a Chartered Librarian (male or female) for this post at the Arnold Hill Comprehensive School, Gedling Road, Arnold, Nottingham.

For further details write to the Assistant County Librarian, Education Library Service, County Library, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham (Ref. DCC) or telephone Nottingham 863388 ext. 722.

Letters of application, giving the names and addresses of two referees, should be sent direct to the Headmaster at the school.

Closing date 28 May, 1976.

TRINITY AND ALL SAINTS' COLLEGES

(Affiliated with the University of Leeds)

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified librarians for second post in the library within the Unified Resources Service.

Salary in Librarians Scale, £2,127 to £3,363 minimum of £3,522 for a qualified librarian.

Further particulars and application forms from the Librarian, Trinity and All Saints' College, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5HD, to whom completed applications should be returned by 25th May, 1976.

CORPORATION OF LONDON

CITY BUSINESS LIBRARY

CHARTERED LIBRARIANS required with experience of scientific/business information service within the Corporation of Greater London. Salary £2,127-£3,363 (Librarians Scale) plus London Weighting £60 pa. Commencing salaries according to qualifications and experience. Superannuation scheme.

Application form and further details from Deputy Library Director, Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ.

LONDON BOROUGH OF HEREFORD

BRANCH LIBRARIAN

Grade A

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified Chartered Librarians for a BRANCH LIBRARIAN, Grade A(1) £2,922-£3,282 (Inclusive London Weighting) for Leominster with relevant expenses and legal fees.

Application forms and particulars from the Borough Librarian, Central Library, Offa's Road, Hereford, Tel. 0432 [illegible]

Closing date 1st June, 1976.

LIBRARIANS

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY LIBRARY

BIBLIOGRAPHER

LENDING LIBRARY

Salary: Librarians, £2,127 to £3,363.

Application forms and further details from the Principal Area Librarian, Parkes Library, Bedford Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, returnable within 14 days of the appearance of this advertisement.

Applicants are asked to note that it is the county council's policy that applicants are asked to give notice to members of an approved or limited reserve list.

J. Nimrod Brown, County Clerk and Chief Executive.

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY LIBRARY

MOBILE LIBRARIAN

UTTOXETER MOBILE LIBRARY

Salary: Librarians, £2,127 to £3,363.

Application forms and further details from the Principal Area Librarian, Parkes Library, Bedford Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, returnable within 14 days of the appearance of this advertisement.

Applicants are asked to note that it is the county council's policy that applicants are asked to give notice to members of an approved or limited reserve list.

J. Nimrod Brown, County Clerk and Chief Executive.

THE LONDON LIBRARY

CATALOGUER required with knowledge of Russian, Slavonic and Oriental languages.

Salary £2,127 to £3,363 according to age and experience.

Apply by letter to the Librarian, The London Library, 14 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4LG. Tel. 930 7705/6.

PARMITER'S SCHOOL

(Voluntary Aided Grammar School, 800 boys)

Part-time CHARTERED LIBRARIAN required in June (7th or 28th as possible, preferably) to take charge of the School Library.

Approximately 20½ hours, plus the possibility of up to six hours additional per week, term time only.

Salary Scale: Librarian Grade III—£2,710 plus £410 London Allowance (pro rata for part-time engagement).

Please apply stating qualifications and experience to The Headmaster, Parmiter's School, Aspenlea Road, London, E5 [illegible]. 01-985 3041.

LIBRARIAN

Qualified LIBRARIAN to take full charge of Legal Library for City firm of Solicitors in modern building close to Moorgate. Experience in legal library an advantage. Salary £3,366 p.a. Hours 9-5 (flexible). Lunch work together with present assistant, Mon. 9.30-5.30, to be considered. Hours 9.30-5 p.m. Mon. to Friday, 9.30-12 p.m. Saturday. Salary not less than £3,000 per annum. For interview telephone 628 4566.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

CHIEF LIBRARIAN

Will all intending applicants for the above post please contact the Personnel Officer, Bethnal Green Town Hall, Bethnal Green, London, E2 9JP. Tel. 01-980 4831 ext. 2.

LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL

LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

We invite applications for two posts in a rapidly developing library mainly for postgraduate students and academic staff. The posts are in the information and acquisitions sections of the library.

We want keen young people, educated to at least 'A' level standard, who are interested in library work. Excellent facilities, salary according to age and education on a scale starting at £2,422 per annum including London Allowance.

Apply by 22 May with curriculum vitae to Mrs Vernon, London Business School, Sussex Place, Regent's Park, London NW1 4SA (01-262 5050).

HOUSE OF LORDS LIBRARY

A part-time experienced CATALOGUER is required for a period of not less than three years, within the Library's Grade IV scale, allowance will be made for experience. Working hours within an 18-hour week will be negotiable.

Applications, with career details, should be made to:

The Establishment Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW.

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM POLYTECHNIC

APPLICATIONS are invited from Chartered Librarians for the following POSTS:

TUTOR LIBRARIAN (Lecturer II)

To be concerned with activities within the new Department, to be opened in 1977 and with the library of unique programme.

ASSISTANT TUTOR LIBRARIAN (Lecturer I)

To undertake duties primarily in the field of Art and Design.

Salary scales: Lecturer II £3,070 to £3,363; Lecturer I, £3,540 to £4,377 (both posts plus £312 supplement).

Further details and application forms (to be returned by 8th May, 1976) from the Personnel Officer, City of Birmingham Polytechnic (CE2), Room 133, Perry Barr, Birmingham B42 2SU.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Intending candidates for the post of Chief Librarian at Tower Hamlets are invited to communicate with the Secretary as soon as possible, 7, Ridgmount Street, Store Street, London WC1E 7AE.

KESTON COLLEGE

Keston College needs Russian-speaking librarian to organize the librarian archive on relations between religion and communism and to handle continuing inflow of material. Knowledge of German or Czech also helpful. Salary negotiable.—Write: Rev. Michael Bourdeaux, Keston College, Keston, Kent BR2 6BA.

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

There is a vacancy in the library of the British Broadcasting Institution for an ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN. The library is mainly concerned with the social and communications sciences of national and international broadcasting organizations and broadcasting practice. Apart from routine library work the Assistant Librarian should deal with varied inquiries about the Institute's work, broadcasting and related subjects. Technical staff and subscription.

Application to G. A. Jones, Staff Director, The Institute, 14 Park Street, London, W1Y 4AA.

PUBLIC & UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

LECTURESHIP IN ENGLISH

APPLICATIONS are invited for a LECTURESHIP IN ENGLISH in the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, tenable from 1st September, 1976.

Initial salary will be within the range £2,422-£3,363 (Lecturer I) or £3,363-£4,377 (Lecturer II).

Application forms and further particulars (two) from the Academic Registrar, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL, quoting reference 40/76/G. Closing date for receipt of applications is 11th June, 1976.

JAMAICA

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

Applications are invited for the following posts in the LIBRARY: (1) ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN; (2) ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN/SENIOR ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.

At permit the Department offers programmes leading to B.A., Diploma (Library Studies), M.A. (Library Studies), A Diploma in Library Studies. A proposal for a master's degree by research or by course work is under consideration. Duties to be assumed as soon as possible.

Qualifications: (1) Assistant Librarian: Assistant Librarian or Senior Library Assistant will be designated. Qualifications and experience appropriate to post. (2) Assistant Librarian/Senior Librarian must be either graduates with approved professional qualifications or holders of the Diploma in Library Studies. Qualifications formally by former applicants for the post of Senior Library Assistant must either hold the Associateship in Library Association (not the equivalent) or be graduates, preferably with Diploma in Library Studies. Applicants for the post of Senior Library Assistant who have adequate qualifications and have experience but not qualified will be given preference.

Salary Scale: Lecturer, 1978-79 (Jan.) J$8,000 p.a. (£2,422) to J$12,000 p.a. (£3,363); Assistant Librarian, 1978-79 (Jan.) J$9,000 p.a. (£2,422) to J$13,000 p.a. (£3,363); Senior Library Assistant, 1978-79 (Jan.) J$7,000 p.a. (£2,422) to J$11,000 p.a. (£3,363). Commencing salaries according to qualifications and experience. Superannuation scheme.

Accommodation will be in the University at a rent of J$1,000 (£280) per annum. Free use of the University's medical services. Housing allowance of J$2,000 (£560) per annum. Study and travel grant. Family passages. Gratuity of 4 months' salary. Expatriate allowance are not eligible to receive housing or Study Travel Grant passages.

Applications (one original and copies) giving full particulars of age, qualifications, experience, date of birth, married status and the names of three referees should be sent as soon as possible to: The Registrar, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica, West Indies.

Please quote reference number 1/1/1 and 1/1/2 and state which post is being applied for. Applicants should also state which of the two posts they are prepared to accept if offered only one post. Applicants should be prepared to take up appointment at short notice.

ROYAL COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE

COUNTY LIBRARIAN

PERSONAL

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES

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TRAVEL

GIVE-AWAY Air Fares to Athens, Delhi, Karachi, Delhi, Bombay, Cairo, Basle, Paris, Marseille, Barcelona, Algeciras, Nice, Naples, Tunis, Calcutta, Osaka, Tokyo, Lagos, Panama, Lima, Quito, Rome, Turin, Venice, Dubrovnik, Tel Aviv, Istanbul, Oslo, Athens, Belgrade, Amsterdam, Accra, Nairobi, Lusaka, Jo'burg. 01-439 2014 (24 hrs). 1st Floor, 117 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

VACANT APPOINTMENTS

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE. Honours graduate, writer seeks and will assist research projects, undertake commissioned research, translate, edit, ghost. Reply: Box 1000, Hilary Hodgkins, 1 Hillfield Avenue, Muswell Hill, London, N.W.10.

WANTED—Young person, preferably Latin-American, interested in Spanish, to assist young man lost for words. Generous reward for entertaining. Apply (Hilly) Box 1000, The Times, London WC1X 8EZ.

HOUSE PUBLICATIONS EDITOR

Person with editorial experience required to edit records and the Circulation Department. Duties will include preparing summaries and digests from daily and technical journals in conjunction with our Circulation Officer; preparing for publication Reports received and Special Speeches, and decision regarding which of our House magazines.

Applicants should be aged between and years, educated to at least 'A' level standard, have good English and preferably know French. Salary will include [illegible]